



Newsletter



O.I.C. Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture
April 2002 No. 57

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The Third Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers of the OIC Member States
hosted by the State of Qatar

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- * The Islamic Art Museum Malaysia (IAMM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- * The Museum of Islamic Art at the Benaki Museum, Athens, Greece

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(IRCICA)*

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EDITORIAL

This issue of the Newsletter covers a number of recent and forthcoming events related to the cultural aspects of international relations. The first article outlines the highlights of the Joint Forum of the Organisation of Islamic Conference and the European Union which was held in Istanbul in February, at the initiative of H.E. Mr. İsmail Cem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. This was the first formal encounter of the two organizations over an agenda that was of interest for virtually all mankind: the member countries of the two parties, represented at ministerial level, expressed their views and suggestions on how best to comprehend, and then improve, the relations between the two civilisational groups they represent and among all peoples in general. The treatment of such an essentially cultural theme from the standpoint of political analysis has underscored once again that cultural factors have assumed a growing role in shaping world politics in our time and that this fact is now recognized by many. We are quoting excerpts from the speeches and comments made during the forum. These texts bring out the salient points of the talks and reflect that the many questions that are bound to remain open, just as the points of agreement, were discussed in a generally constructive and open-minded manner. During the period of the forum, H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz, the Secretary General of the OIC, received the participants in a party at IRCICA's headquarters in Yıldız Palace; it was a memorable occasion, where we had the chance to brief the participants on our activities - particularly on the new projects. After having received information on our research programs, many guests pointed out that the Centre's whole work provides continuous inputs to the study of subjects connected with that of this forum, taking into consideration, in particular, that it yields reference materials, research findings and objective observations which can be used with much profit in the treatment of these subjects.

IRCICA's departments are busily engaged nowadays in preparations related to meetings that are scheduled for the coming months. The first one in the works is the Eighth Architectural Workshop, scheduled for July-August 2002. This series of annual workshops was initiated in 1994 as an international effort to rescue the architectural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Gradually, subjects relevant to all cases of restoration and conservation of destroyed or threatened heritage came to be included within the scope of this program. Simultaneously with the workshops, we sometimes organised symposia and seminars relating to global architectural themes. The purview of this year's workshop, explained in the present issue of the Newsletter, reflects the same objective, that of responding to the problems faced in the preservation of heritage throughout the world. Other meetings that are currently in preparation are: the congress on "Islamic Arts and Crafts" to be organised by IRCICA jointly with the Ministry of Culture of Iran, in Isfahan, October 2002, the symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in the Balkans" to take place in Albania (2003) and the symposium on "Islamic Civilisation in East Africa" to be organised in cooperation with the Islamic University of Uganda (2003).

I have the pleasure to inform our readers that the web site of IRCICA (please find its address inside the front cover) now contains detailed information on all the activities undertaken by IRCICA since its establishment. It is being updated and expanded regularly by the inclusion of brief reports on activities going on at the Centre and outlines of forthcoming events. We are pleased to observe that the number of visits to our site grows day by day and hope that this site will soon become another medium by which our Centre can contribute, as mentioned above, to international cultural rapprochement.

Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu

OIC-EU JOINT FORUM ON "CIVILISATION AND HARMONY: THE POLITICAL DIMENSION", ISTANBUL

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member and Observer Countries of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the Member and Candidate Countries of the European Union came together in Istanbul, on 12-13 February 2002, for a Joint Forum, at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Turkey. The Forum was on the theme "Civilisation and Harmony: The Political Dimension". The parties aimed to share their assessments of the world's present political situation and their views and suggestions as to how promote understanding and harmony among civilisations.

The Press Release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey sets forth the background and concept of the forum: "History has taught us that the lack of mutual knowledge and respect among civilisations can greatly affect world stability and peace. Harmony and welfare are nurtured when different peoples make communication a priority, taking the time to express and listen to each other's views and interests, acknowledging and tolerating differences, while at the same time seeking out commonalities that can help build strong relationships and promote political and economic cooperation. The tragic events of September 11th and their repercussions have shown the need to strengthen tolerance and understanding among different cultures to avoid reappearance of deeply rooted prejudices that can surface. The horrifying attacks of September 11th are purely brutal acts of terrorism and they cannot be explained or justified for religious, cultural or any other reasons whatsoever. On the other hand, September 11th has also sparked a growing consciousness of the need for all sides to discuss and attempt to better understand the differences in perceptions, values and interests, as well as to promote tolerance and appreciation for cultural diversity among them. We jointly have a responsibility to address and resolve issues which can lead to divisions within and between our communities, to embrace and value our diversities, and to promote and uphold the values we all share."

During its deliberations, the OIC-EU Joint Forum acknowledged the various activities, resolutions, recommendations and reports of international and regional organisations, such as the UN, the OIC, the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the Arab League, the Organisation of African Unity, UNESCO and other fora as the Barcelona Process, including the Global Agenda on Dialogue Among Civilisations adopted by the UN General Assembly on 21 November 2001, which are designed to protect and improve the common heritage of mankind and the shared values of different cultures, and to enhance tolerance, dialogue and cooperation within and among nations and peoples.

The Forum started with the Ministerial Plenary Meeting which was opened by H.E. Mr. Ismail Cem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. In his opening statement, the Minister pointed out that this meeting was the first major encounter of the 21st century and the first of its kind as a conference of two representative political organisations of global scope, of different civilisational dimensions of multiple cultures. Speaking of the factors which prompted this initiative, he said that "the tragedy of 11 September, besides the deep sorrow that it generated, had shown how vulnerable the basic understanding among different cultures and civilisations is, and how easy it is for deep-rooted prejudices to surface. One of the first temptations that developed after 11 September was to identify terrorism on cultural and religious lines, pitting one part of humanity against the other. Deeper and wider fault-lines of global nature were thus encouraged. The second result, this time positive, of 11 September was an emerging consciousness: A mutual realisation of our inadequate knowledge about each other; of the need for forging new relationships, of attaining solidarity through the respect for cultural diversity. Through our mutual efforts, it is now better understood that terrorism does not have a religion, does not have a geography, it can not be defined on cultural lines and can not have any justification."

H.E. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey, delivered the inaugural address, in which he pointed out that the OIC-EU Joint Forum was a historic meeting for both its timing and content. The President said "This stems from the fact that a number of prominent civilisations have had their cradle as well as their zenith in the regions that are home to those countries which make up the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the European Union. The wide range of values, that we today call civilisation, define the common level reached by humanity as whole. These are the values upheld by all religions, matured throughout a long period of interaction. ... The vast accumulation of knowledge in the fields of science, religion, arts, law, politics and administration held by the peoples gathered under the roofs of these important organisations also forms the material and moral foundations that will help these same peoples to contribute to international peace, stability and prosperity in the future. Historic experiences of these nations show that harmony, peace and prosperity are on the rise during periods when mutual understanding, dialogue and cooperation can be established among them. Our past experiences teach us that discriminatory tendencies that cause peoples to exclude one another, not only fuel conflicts but also deprive them of the opportunity of having mutually enriching contributions. We believe that the nations united under the roofs of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the European Union are aware that throughout history their successes have been the fruit of interaction and mutual enrichment. The member states of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the European Union which share this historic experience and awareness, will contribute significantly to the universal peace and prosperity by coming together in the beginning of the 21st century to collectively define medium and long-term problems that lie before humanity and search solutions for them. In this regard the Organisation

H.E. Mr. Ismail Cem, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey: *"are civilizations, cultures, nations headed for an inevitable clash, a predestined doom? Or, does humanity have the wisdom and courage to move towards a spirit of working and living together? I believe we have the opportunity to take the positive course. ... in both ancient and modern times, history teaches us that the way we address the issue of 'the other' determines the dynamics of stability and peace."*

H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jabour Al Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar: *"The cultural factor has assumed great importance in the conflicts of the 21st century, since it has become a defining element in international relations which it will influence and reshape."*

of the Islamic Conference and European Union Joint Forum constitutes a first step of great importance. It is encouraging to see that both the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the European Union have adopted a forward-looking and responsible attitude in the wake of the events of September 11. We believe that great responsibility lies with these two large and effective international organisations."

H.E. Mr. Josep Piqué i Camps, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, addressed the session in the capacity of the EU Presidency. Evoking the conditions of uncertainty created across the world by the tragic events of 11 September, Mr. Piqué i Camps indicated that the

reactions they aroused had shown how easy it was for deep-rooted prejudices to surface. He said that prejudice mainly results from a lack of understanding and that it is the undesirable consequence of ignorance and disrespectful attitude towards the other. The Minister pointed out that "an essential element in the interrelation among civilisations as well as within themselves is the respect and promotion of human rights. These rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent as it has been declared by all participants in the Vienna Human Rights Conference." He stated that "the European Union has made of the promotion and respect of these rights one of the basic elements of its foreign policy." Mr. Piqué referred to the similarities between cultures and civilisations and said that Christian and Islamic cultures cannot be regarded as two mutually isolated compartments. "We Europeans are well aware of the major role Muslim intellectuals already played centuries ago as messengers of the classic wisdom. Europe would not be Europe or, at least, would be a reality without this shared experience. Our past is linked just as our present is and, indeed, as our future will be. ... Inside and outside the borders of the EU we

are ready to support dialogue amongst cultures and peoples as a means of presenting peace, stability and understanding. In the next few years the EU will embark on a very ambitious initiative which is the accession of many countries that were separated from us for a long time due to the East-West confrontation. The EU is also expanding its relations with the rest of the world. We recognize that the elimination of poverty and the support of economic and social development throughout the world are fundamental responsibilities for us. In this respect, it is worth pointing out that the EU and its member States provide more than half of the economic assistance that the developing world receives."

Representing H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar and Chairman of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference of the OIC Member States, H.E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem bin Jabour Al Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar spoke, pointing to major issues confronting peoples of the world in the present world. He said that "... The cultural factor has assumed great importance in the conflicts of the 21st century, since it has become a defining element in international relations which it will influence and reshape it. ... The acceptance of and respect for cultural diversity require the renunciation of the feelings of distinction and superiority and the desire to dominate. In the context of such diversity, cooperation among States should provide the opportunity for national specificities to manifest themselves so as to enable these States to manage their affairs, thus ensuring the continuity of fruitful dialogue among cultures. ... Some, especially in the west, have attempted to usher in a new historical phrase based on the thesis of "conflict between civilisations" without paying attention to the solution of the chronic problems that have plagued us, foremost among which is the question of Palestine. Such attempts lack wisdom and farsightedness and disregard the historical facts. Therefore, we need, first and foremost, to intensify joint efforts to arrive at fair and equitable solutions to such problems. ... We have advocated dialogue among various cultures to circumscribe the increasing scope of misunderstanding in these delicate circumstances. Our call has not been restricted to dialogue with Europe despite our recognition of its political, cultural and social significance, but we have called for a dialogue with

all peoples and cultures as a means for establishing peace and coexistence based on amity and tolerance. We have also supported all international efforts to this effect. Therefore, it is our aspiration that this forum will be a prelude to other forums in which these cultures are represented." The Minister conveyed the invitation of H.H. the Emir of the State of Qatar to convene a summit meeting of the EU and the OIC in the State of Qatar, at a date to be determined through communication between their Presidencies.

H.E. Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary General and High Representative of the EU, pinpointed the main themes of the meeting, as: dialogue amongst civilisations; the necessity for harmony; and the search for a new political dimension. He underlined the need to reinforce the political dimension, given the paramount importance of political dialogue as an instrument in bringing peoples closer to each other. The Secretary General declared that they "do not see the dialogue between civilisations as the dialogue between two distinct blocks with, on one side, the European Union, part of the Western world with a mainly Christian heritage; and, on the other side, an Islamic world in the South and mainly Arab. This is quite a common cliché, but it is a simplistic formulation which overlooks the complexity of our common identity. The developing culture in Europe encompasses all civilisations. ... We should therefore try to avoid presenting the dialogue amongst civilisations as a dialogue between North and South or as mainly a dialogue between religions." Concerning the search for harmony, the second theme of the conference, H.E. Mr. Solana pointed out that this search ought to be carried out in the light of the lessons of the past. "Developing harmony will mean more prevention of possible conflicts and more efforts in terms of peace-making through collective efforts. This has been done successfully in the past, and should continue to be done where necessary. Several important members of the OIC, European and Western countries have taken part in the restoration of peace. For instance in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the OIC was part of the efforts to implement the peace agreements. And today, you can note the huge efforts made by European and OIC countries to try to rebuild a peaceful Afghanistan, on the basis of the Bonn agreement."

Mr. Solana concluded his address by emphasising three immediate priority areas in which the EU and the OIC could look at a better way to work together: a determination to eliminate terrorism from the headlines, a determination to fulfill commitments towards the Afghan pledge to recreate a country at peace, a determination to end the all too long conflict in the Middle East.

H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz, Secretary General of the OIC was accompanied by a delegation of the OIC General Secretariat, as well as by Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Director General of IRCICA and H.E. Dr. Mohammed Habib

Belkhodja, Secretary General of the Islamic Jurisprudence Academy. H.E. Dr. Belkéziz delivered an address, in which he underscored the significance of the OIC-EU Joint Forum as a quite unprecedented event in the annals of international relations or even in the history of mankind, "aimed at a forthright exchange, as a preliminary step towards the achievement of mutual understanding,

reconciliation, and resolution of certain differences resulting from a backlog of various misconceptions, misapprehensions and lack of knowledge about each other, a legacy which has been further exacerbated by stereotypical, negative perceptions that have been seeded in our minds on both sides by certain extremist fanatics without any proper fathoming of realities." Referring to the events of 11 September, the Secretary General pointed out that these events have been unduly exploited by some, beyond their actual and real context. He recalled that "We did as a matter of fact openly condemn - as did the world at large - these contemptible terrorist events - which no religion, whatever creed or doctrine, be it political or intellectual, approves of. ... And it is quite unfair to link any faith with such a criminal act, let alone the faith of Islam whose principal trademarks are mercy, peace and tolerance, being a faith of fair balance which is totally abhorrent to extremism which it proscribes and urges against. Likewise, claiming that this appalling act was directed at the Western civilisation bespeaks a high level of intentional misguidance. ..." H.E. Dr. Belkéziz then evoked the main common denominators that bind the Islamic world and Western Europe together: "First, among these denominators, special mention should be made of our shared spiritual reference, as Islam acknowledges

Christianity which is the faith adopted by the majority in the Western world. ... Second, the intellectual reference and cultural complementarity shared by the Islamic world and the West. ... The Arab and Islamic Orient has been the cradle of the old civilisations which bloomed in Mesopotamia, on the banks of the Nile, in Persia and in the remote parts of India, and it was in its lap that the Greek civilisation, which forms the mainstream intellectual reference in the West and which did not emerge from a vacuum, was actually configured. Later on, the Islamic civilisation came and drew on the civilisations of the peoples in its region, in Iraq, Egypt,

and Persia, as well as in other parts of the world, and condensed the essence of those civilisations in the elaboration of the Islamic thought which is anchored in the Islamic faith.

Afterwards, Muslim scholars emerged and opened up to the Greek civilisation and derived benefit from it through analysis, critical review and borrowing; and they came to be the

"Developing harmony will mean more prevention of possible conflicts and more efforts in terms of peace-making through collective efforts. This has been done successfully in the past, and should continue to be done where necessary. Several important members of the OIC, European and Western countries have taken part in the restoration of peace. For instance in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the OIC was part of the efforts to implement the peace agreements. And today, you can note the huge efforts made by European and OIC countries to try to rebuild a peaceful Afghanistan, on the basis of the Bonn agreement." Mr. Javier Solana, Secretary General and High Representative of the EU

best transmitters to the West of the Greek heritage ... Third, the physical, geographic proximity, which is such that Europe and the Islamic World form two neighboring entities who share extensive territorial frontiers across Europe and Asia as well as across the Mediterranean." Elaborating upon the dialogue between the Muslim and the Western worlds, the Secretary General said that "In order for our work to be fruitful, the dialogue we seek must be inspired by careful and long study, must have stamina, and must not be confined to government or state officials but must also include the popular sections and all levels of civil society organisations. ... Of great help to us in this connection, are the fair and well balanced positions adopted by the European Federation vis-à-vis many of the Islamic just causes, foremost of which, the Palestinian people's longstanding ordeal under the Israeli occupation and their continued deprivation of their legitimate rights to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent State on their fatherland. Such positions will, no doubt, be of assistance in achieving rapprochement between the two parties' views, as they have to do with the most sensitive matters in their relations."

The opening ceremony continued with statements by Ministers of OIC and EU Member and Observer Countries where 37 heads of delegation from both Organisations took the floor. The opening ceremony was followed by a working luncheon, which began with the Keynote Speech delivered by H.E. Mr. Bülend Ecevit, Prime Minister of Turkey. The Prime Minister expressed his belief that "... the so-called conflict of civilisations and cultures has largely lost its validity and the way has opened for the merger of the East and the West. ... Another scourge that humanity faced was the conflicts of ideologies and racial hatreds. These led to wars, to genocides and pogroms. And more recently conflicts of religious nature superseded ideological

conflicts in certain geographies. This may be more dangerous than any other form of conflict, because religion is deeply imbedded in the souls of most individuals - more deeply than ideologies. ... This Joint Forum, initiated by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, demonstrates the determination of the European Union and of the Organisation of Islamic Conference to enhance international harmony between different cultures, religions and concepts." Prime Minister Ecevit also referred to the September 11 terrorist attacks, which were falsely claimed to be carried out in the name of Islam. The world was saved from splitting out dangerously, thanks to the responsible behaviour shown by both Islamic and Christian countries in condemning these terrorist acts, without equating Islam with terrorism.

Then, a panel titled "Political and Cultural Fault Lines" was chaired by Austrian Foreign Minister Ms. Ferrero-Waldner. The panel heard Prince El-Hassan bin Talal of Jordan, French Foreign Minister Mr. Hubert Vedrine, German Foreign Minister Mr. Joschka Fischer, and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Sattar. The French Foreign Minister stated that it was difficult to identify the concept of civilisation while the idea of "clash of civilisations" was not liked and generally ignored which he called it an "ostrich" policy. He referred to the Middle East conflict as an example and emphasised that the EU and Arabs have different

perceptions on this issue. In this context, he argued that, there was, however denied, a risk of clash between civilisations, and this clash could be avoided via a realistic dialogue. He suggested that this dialogue could be attained via a real dialogue spirit and proposed "Spirit of Istanbul" to this end.

We have to inaugurate between ourselves a positive dialogue not only to overcome the current crisis, which we see as transitory, but also to establish the foundations of dialogue for our future and for the sake of posterity. That is why we would want this dialogue to be also a strategic one that takes into account the basic economic as well as the political interests for the short and long terms and we would want this dialogue to be a civilised and equitable one based on the common human values that we share and that are derived from the core principles of our two complementary civilisations so as to arrive at true multiculturalism and diversity instead of absolute and universal globalism. H.E. Dr. A. Belkéziz, Secretary General of OIC

He underlined that such dialogue should be far away from bureaucracy and should be regarded as the outcome of the Joint Forum. Then, H.R.H. Prince Hassan emphasised that Islam was actually "in" the West today and subsequently

affected by the West. The "Parliament of Cultures" project he had been working on could support the activities of the forum. He also mentioned that there were common problems on both the OIC and EU sides. Therefore, it was essential to support the moderate sections in the countries concerned in order to provide and maintain this dialogue. In his speech, the German Foreign Minister touched upon the concept of tolerance and said that this concept was intertwined with respecting different cultures and necessitated dialogue between cultures. He referred to the issue of foreigners in his country and underlined the presence of three million Muslims, most of whom were of Turkish origin. He stressed that the Muslims in European countries enjoy tolerance whereas Christians mostly were not treated in the same manner in many Muslim countries. He added that the only way to avoid clash between cultures was through learning and tolerance. He also focused on the Palestine conflict and stated that the Palestinian people had a legitimate right to establish their own state while Israel had the right to survive and to safeguard its existence as a state. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Sattar drew a parallel between cultural fault lines and tectonic developments, wishing that those lines would not cause catastrophes similar to tectonic ones. He underlined that the inclination to clashes should be prevented on the basis of principles of international law and justice.

The OIC-EU Joint Forum continued with three main panels, which were devoted to the following themes, respectively: "Confronting common challenges in today's environment", "Politics and Media", and "Who is 'the Other'? Does it really exist?" Each panel was opened by the moderator, followed by statements by panelists, interventions by ministers, and a conclusion by the moderator. The first panel, moderated by H.E. Mr. Jan Kubis, Secretary General of OSCE, was addressed by H.E. Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Ahmed Maher El-Sayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Prof. Bernard Lewis (USA) and Prof. Hassan Hanafi (Egypt). The speakers evoked the main challenges facing mankind in the present period. In this context, H.E. Dr. Kharrazi pinpointed these challenges to be poverty, resurgence of Islamophobia and the dialogue of civilisations. Speaking as a historian, Prof. Lewis said that there is a long history of conflicts between the OIC and EU countries, but also a long relationship of exchanges, and that this positive side can be a basis on which to join forces to fight poverty, tensions and other common enemies. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt Mr. El-Sayed spoke of the cases of asymmetry between the OIC and the EU, Islam and the West, and said that despite this Islam is already in the West and the West is already in Islam. He pointed out that the dialogue of civilisations would be complete if and only if the Indian, Chinese and other civilisations joined in the effort. He said that a pervasive culture of tolerance and justice is still to be created. Other points raised by the discussants were: making the necessary changes in people's mentality, dialogue at another level: between the sacred and the secular, the Arab-European dialogue which was started in 1975, freedom and justice as the two faces of a coin, the direct relationship between the growth of income gaps and risks of conflicts and tensions, the universality of human problems, among others.

The second panel, moderated by H.E. Dr. Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, heard the following personalities: the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Abdul Sattar, panelist Dr. Thierry de Montbrial, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia H.E. Dr. Dimitrij Rupel. In his introduction, Dr. Amr Moussa spoke of the consequences of the events of

11 September and the reactions they aroused, in particular the frequent references made to a clash of civilisations; recalling that these references were expressed mostly in terms of a clash against Islam, showing Islam as the responsible agent, Dr. Moussa underlined that accusations made need to be explained. Dr. Dimitrij Rupel underlined the role of the media in fighting ignorance and prejudice. He said that the media should necessarily be political, but it should at the same time be impartial, and that politicians should be capable of listening to diversity. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Mr. Abdul Sattar evoked the humanitarian concepts stipulated in the international documents and agreements on human rights and said that for human rights to be established equitably, the West ought to put its pluralism into practice. He spoke of the role of the media in the context of politics. Then, Dr. Thierry de Montbrial spoke, underlining that given that the media is a human group, its independence should be kept under scrutiny and that a critical mind should be developed at the level of society.

Finally, the third panel, moderated by H.E. Mr. Walter Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, heard the following speakers: the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece H.E. Mr. George Papandreou, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey H.E. Mr. Ismail Cem, panelists Prof. M'hammed Fantar (Tunisia) and Prof. İlber Ortaylı (Turkey). The moderator concisely described the frame of reference of the theme to pave the way for discussions. "We, are the others," he said, and "diversity is not an obstacle". Then, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece Mr. Papandreou said that "the other" is a reality and that the question is to see how to improve the way we respect the other. He underlined the need to establish this new positive understanding in order to be able to tackle the common problems. Then, Mr. Ismail Cem said, in his speech, that regions, religions, political blocs, etc. are considered "the other"; whenever used with a negative connotation, the concept of "the other" represents an effort of self-justification. "Self" could not exist without "the other". This was a result of dialectical reasoning within the context of identity shaping. But, politically "the other" had always been defined with negative values. For this reason "the other" should be defined as the one resorting to terrorism, occupation and extremism as

well as to violating human rights. Pointing out that this concept is subject to change, he recalled the importance of value judgments in shaping it in peoples' minds. In the present world, this concept is dependent on values; "the other" is different by what he does and not by what he is. The next speaker, Prof. Dr. Fantar, traced the theoretical and philosophical framework within which the concept of "the other" comes into shape and underlined that one's existence can be defined only in relation with the other's. He said that the ones who did not know their own identity would harm the others as well. Therefore a society should first know and own its very values. Today Islam was explained by other sources rather than Islamic sources. Plural should be changed into singular via dialogue between cultures. It would be useful if "the other" could be defined by some contemporary values. The societies should not expect accommodation at their present positions, but every society should first start looking at itself, and improve and change. The criteria should not be what was said, but what was done by the societies. As to Prof. İlber Ortaylı, he recalled that there was always an "other" for everybody, and any attempt to change "the other" was not democratic since nobody had a right to change the other. People should agree that the civilisations, in the plural, are there; as long as they communicate and they know each other, they are not "others", and it is also a fact that they need each other. Other ideas articulated by the discussants in this session included the following: political divergences are part of the civilisational dialogue; people ought to be mobilised politically in order to better understand the other; the notion of "the other" is a historical one; the inherent relationship between the notion of "the other" and identity; the distinction between "self" and "the other" is defined by values; knowing and accepting the other is the way toward tolerance; notwithstanding the differences between civilisations, an understanding can be developed toward considering mankind as one civilisation based on shared human values.

The Press Release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey outlines the points agreed upon by the Forum participants, as follows:

- The Forum reaffirms its strong belief that cultures, in their diversity, complement and enhance one another. The Forum also confirms its belief in the harmony among civilisations and in its attainability.

- The main means to support coherence and solidarity and to avoid racial, religious and cultural prejudices is to enhance our knowledge of one another through communication and cooperation for the promotion of common universal values, such as those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments. To this end the two political organisations, the EU and the OIC have a joint responsibility to contribute to the achievements of these goals.
- The Forum affirms that terrorism cannot be justified for any reason whatsoever. It recognizes the joint responsibility to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations within the framework of the UN, in conformity with its Charter and its resolutions.
- The OIC and EU countries are committed to defining problems emerging from cultural prejudices and political and economic injustices and to promoting solutions that will contribute to universal peace, welfare and stability.
- The Forum underlined that for peace, stability and harmony to prevail, the Middle East conflict must be settled in a just and comprehensive manner and in accordance with international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. In this context, the "two state" solution will contribute to bring peace and security to the peoples concerned.
- The OIC-EU Forum, having listened to the exchange of ideas and to participants' views, has concluded that there is a need for further cooperation. The Forum proposes that existing bilateral and multilateral frameworks continue to be used for general debate on the issues raised during this meeting.
- The Forum noted with appreciation the invitation of His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar in his capacity as current Chairman of the OIC to host a OIC-EU Troika meeting in the second half of the current year, in Doha.
- The Forum thanked the Government of Turkey for the initiative and effort in organizing this Forum that constituted an event of great political significance. They welcomed Turkey's intention to publish the *compte rendu* of the OIC-EU Joint Forum and its readiness to facilitate communication among the participating countries and organisations if the need arises.

The Secretary General of OIC, H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz welcomed the OIC-EU Joint Forum participants at IRCICA

After the closing session on the second and last day of the OIC-EU Joint Forum, those Ministerial delegations of the OIC and EU countries who had not yet left Istanbul came together at IRCICA for a tea party, at the invitation of H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz, Secretary General of the OIC. Some of the scholars who participated in the Forum as panelists and some members of the international press reporting on the conference were also present. The Secretary General of the OIC together with IRCICA Director General Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu met with the Ministerial delegations, where the talks centered on the Forum's theme as well as on various issues of international politics and cultural affairs. This informal gathering was an opportunity for the participants to renew acquaintances, exchange views and at the same time, learn more about the activities of IRCICA. Exhibitions of books selected from the Centre's library and related to the arts, languages and other cultural aspects of the OIC member countries drew the visitors' interest.



An exhibition of books selected from IRCICA library. From right, the Secretary General of OIC H.E. Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey H.E. Mr. İsmail Cem, and, IRCICA Director General Prof. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu



Prof. İhsanoğlu gives information to Prof. Bernard Lewis (panelist in the Forum) on IRCICA's publications

THE THIRD ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF CULTURE MINISTERS HOSTED BY THE STATE OF QATAR

Doha, 29-31 December 2001

The Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers held its Third Session in Doha, State of Qatar, under the high patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, President of the Ninth Islamic Conference, and at the invitation of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) in cooperation and coordination with the Government of the State of Qatar and the Secretariat of the Ninth Islamic Summit Conference. The conference was held on 29-31 December 2001. His Highness the Emir chaired the opening session and delivered an address in which he indicated that the conference was being held under critical international circumstances, the negative impacts and repercussions of which were reflected on the norms of life and the set of values and concepts. That in turn, made it imperative to explore the right means to deal with these conditions and the challenges posed to our Islamic nation. His Highness stressed the necessity of rectifying the distorted and false image of Islam and Muslims in order to be able to enhance mutual understanding between civilisations, since many peoples were engaged recently in propagating such ideas in wide intellectual and media circles particularly in the West. The Emir of Qatar spoke extensively of the various areas of cooperation between the OIC Member States in the field of culture and information.

Then, H.E. the Secretary General of the OIC, Dr. Abdelouahed Belkéziz took the floor. In his address, the Secretary General stressed the importance of holding the Third Islamic Conference of Culture Ministers at that juncture which the Muslim world was going through. He said that the OIC had assigned paramount importance to culture, given its decisive role in consolidating the identity of peoples. H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, Director General of ISESCO delivered a speech, in which he underlined the role played by culture, specifying that the axis around which evolved culture, in all cases, was the building and the shaping of the human being's personality, adding that, as a

human activity, cultural action was a process of edification and revival and, therefore, was an act performed in favour of a future in which would be fulfilled all conditions of modernity and progress which should, nonetheless, comply with the values of society and tally with all components of the national entity in every milieu and environment. The Director General of UNESCO, Dr. Koichiro Matsuura and the Director General of ALECSO, Dr. Mounji Bousneina, were present at the session and delivered addresses at the opening. The discussions held during the working sessions dealt with the general cultural conditions prevailing in the Islamic world and the repercussions of globalisation trends insofar as culture and information are concerned, on culture in the Muslim societies. The participants reaffirmed the position of the Muslim world on the dialogue among civilisations based on the principles and teachings of Islam which advocate tolerance, peaceful coexistence and mutual respect for the cultural specificities of nations. As stated in its Final Communiqué, the conference reaffirmed "the sincere wish of the Muslim world to pursue dialogue with all cultures and calls upon the international parties to respond to the Muslim world's positive stance on dialogue among civilisations and to express sincere wish for the achievement of mutual understanding among the peoples of the world." The conference called upon the international community to "find a suitable legal formula to facilitate the recovery of the despoiled Islamic cultural properties in compliance with the rules of international law, and as part of enforcement of the right of the peoples to enjoy their cultural specificities and their right to preserve their cultural and historical properties, plundered under occupation and colonisation, and to make all efforts, within the framework of international law, to recover these properties." One of the other matters considered by the conference was the draft program on Islamic capitals of culture, in relation with which it selected the city of Mecca as capital of Islamic culture for the year 2003.

The conference issued resolutions on the above matters, among them the resolution on "Preservation of Islamic cultural hallmarks and institutions in Al-Quds Al-Sharif", by which the conference stressed the need to preserve the rights of the Palestinian people, including the preservation of their cultural properties, institutions and hallmarks, in Palestine and specifically in Al-Quds, and called upon UNESCO to support the Muslim world's position on this issue in international forums. It also stressed the international responsibility for preserving Islamic cultural hallmarks and institutions in Al-Quds Al-Sharif in application of the provisions of international law and in accordance with the resolutions of UNESCO which incorporate these hallmarks, monuments and historical buildings into the universal cultural heritage which must be left untouched without any alteration of its features or distortion of its historical reality.

The conference decided to hold its next (fourth) session in the year 2004, in the Republic of Yemen.

Meetings and contacts made by IRCICA's delegation during the conference period

- A Framework Agreement for Cooperation was signed between IRCICA and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO). The agreement was signed by the Director General of IRCICA Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and the Director General of ISESCO Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, in presence of the delegations participating in the conference. This agreement intensifies and enlarges the cooperation between the two institutions and forges its guidelines, particularly as regards activities

relating to research, publishing, organisation of congresses, seminars and exhibitions in fields of common interest that are geared towards making known the various aspects of Islamic civilisation, correcting and improving its image, and reinforcing dialogue between civilisations.

- His Excellency Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Attiyah, State Minister, Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Heritage, Qatar, and Chairman of the conference, received the Centre's delegation (composed of Director General Prof. İhsanoğlu and Mr. Mohammed Tamimi). for a meeting, during which the on-going and the possible future cooperation between the State of Qatar and IRCICA were discussed at length, with reference to specific projects. On this occasion, samples of the Centre's publications were presented to H.E. the Minister.

- The Director General of IRCICA had bilateral meetings with the ministers and heads of delegations present in the conference and with the representatives of the international media. The talks were on various subjects of international concern, especially those of concern for the Muslim world.

* The Centre's representatives paid visits to some cultural and academic institutions in Qatar. The Director General met with H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Turki, ex-Minister of Education of Qatar and member of IRCICA Governing Board, on the Centre's current activities and future work plans.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Arabic and Islamic studies in Europe: Al-Maktoum Institute established in Scotland

Towards further progress in Arabic and Islamic studies: Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies is now open in Dundee, Scotland. Its objective is to foster excellence in teaching and research in these fields. The Institute is an autonomous and independent body which, since 1 November 2001, operates as a Division of the School of Social and Health Sciences at the University of Abertay Dundee. It was established with funding by His Highness Shaikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, the Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Minister of Industry and Finance in the United Arab Emirates. Lord Watson of Invergowrie, a prominent figure in Scotland, was the Chancellor of the Institute until he was appointed as the Scottish Executive Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Institute is committed to the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural study of a variety of subjects falling within its fields of interest. Although it was originally founded in 2000, the academic programs were inaugurated in autumn 2001. As a postgraduate centre, it offers opportunities for students to work towards Masters and PhD degrees. All qualifications obtainable from the Institute are accredited and issued by the University of Abertay Dundee. Additionally, as part of its development strategy, the Institute is establishing three research centres: the Centre for Islamic Jerusalem Studies, the Centre for Editing Arabic Texts and Manuscripts, and the Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslims

in Scotland. These initiatives are likely to bring fresh inputs to teaching and research in their respective areas; in particular, the Institute is promoting "Islamic Jerusalem Studies", which is becoming increasingly well known. The Institute's address is as follows: Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, 124 Blackness Road, Dundee, Scotland DD1 5PE, Tel.: 01382 908070, Fax: 01382 908077.

Symposium on "Islamic Art in Volga- Ural Region" held in Tatarstan

The Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences and the Russian Union of Museums have organised a symposium on "Islamic Art in Volga-Ural Region" in Kazan, on 10-11 January 2002, in conjunction with a large-scale exhibition of Islamic artifacts selected from the collections of the Hermitage and Tatarstan museums. The symposium theme was delineated to deal intensively with the ethnic and regional specificities of Islamic culture in that region. The session themes were arranged as follows: "Volga-Ural region within the system of Islamic civilisation", "Decorative applied arts: calligraphy", "Islamic architecture in Volga-Ural region", "Islamic tradition in musical culture: art synthesis", "Museum collections on Islamic culture". Twenty-seven papers were presented. For more information on the symposium proceedings, please contact Prof. Guzel Fuad Valeeva-Suleymanova, Institute of History, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, 132, 15 Dostoyevsky str., Kazan 420012, Tel.: 8 (8432) 36-81-25.

The works of the Egyptian master of calligraphy Sayed Ibrahim exhibited in Paris

The Egyptian Cultural Centre in Paris has organised, last January, an exhibition of the works of the famous Egyptian calligrapher Sayed Ibrahim (1897-1994). On display were his plates written in the different styles of calligraphy, such as "thuluth", "naskh", "taliq", "reyhan", "muhaqqaq", etc., and also the inscriptions he wrote on monuments around the world, such as his writing on the Jami Mosque in Bangalore, India. On the whole, the exhibition reflected the rich and varied products of almost a century of efforts and creativity devoted to this art. Dr. Hani Hilal, Counsellor of the Egyptian Cultural Centre, opened the exhibition in presence of French, Egyptian and other Arab art lovers and artists. Sayed Ibrahim and his contributions to this art were commemorated by IRCICA last year: the fifth calligraphy competition, which was organised in 2000-2001, was dedicated to his memory.

"Aria di Baghdad" calligraphy exhibition in Italy

A group of Iraqi calligraphers displayed their calligraphic writings, gildings and illuminations in the city of S. Angelo, Italy, in an exhibition which ran from 16 December 2001 to 18 February 2002. The exhibition subsequently travels to three other cities, including Rome. It comprises more than forty works representing the various styles of writing: "thuluth",

"naskh", "ijaza", "taliq", "diwani", "jaly diwani", "riq'a" and "tughra". Among them are *Hilyes* (texts describing the characteristics of Prophet Mohammed, and compositions that illustrate the numerous possible forms in which the letters can be positioned). The participating artists are: Abdul-Husein al-Ricabi, Abdul-Ridha al-Karmeli, Akram Gergis, Ali, Ahmed, Amer al-Giumeili, Khalil al-Zahawi, Firas Abbas, Heider Rabee, Farah Ammar, Khalil al-Wasiti, Meha al-Hamudi, Mahmud Lutfi, Muhammed Hascim, Rodhan Behia, Sadiq al-Duri, Wisam Sceukat and Selman Ibrahim.

Conference on "Science and Faith in the Third Millennium", Italy

The Physics Department of the University of Bari, in Southern Italy, will organise an international conference on "Science and Faith in the Third Millennium" on 22-24 May 2002. The Chairman of the Organising Committee Prof. Vincenzo Augelli informed IRCICA that for this project, the University of Bari is cooperating with the Polytechnic of Bari, the University of Lecce and the Archdiocese of Bari and that a number of Italian physicists, biologists and philosophers will contribute to the conference together with foreign invited speakers; a talk will be given by Card. Paul Poupard, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture. More information can be obtained from the Physics Department, University of Bari, Tel.: 0039 0805442368, Fax: 0039 0805442434.

“Science and Religion: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives”: a workshop to be held in Sicily

The Ettore Majorana Centre for Scientific Culture is organizing a workshop on the above theme to be held in the International School of History of Physics, in Sicily, on 25-30 September 2002. The workshop's Director, Prof. William R. Shea from the History of Science Institute of Louis Pasteur University, Strasbourg, defines the purpose of the workshop with the following words: "Religion and science have been brothers (sometimes warring brothers) in their quest for knowledge. Neither has access to the whole truth but it has become increasingly clear in recent years that they can benefit from the insights that they have each acquired in their own sphere. This workshop will examine, in the light of recent scholarship, areas where a genuine dialogue is possible. More particularly, we shall consider what we can learn from such incidents as the Galileo Affair, the discovery of the age of the earth, the anthropic principle in cosmology, and the meaning of divine action in the world". The following lecturers will cover the ten major themes: Prof. William R. Shea, "Introduction: The New Dialogue Between Science and Religion"; Prof. John L. Heibron (UK), "How Theology Uses Natural Knowledge and How Science Borrows Religious Conceptions"; Prof. Tore Frängsmyr (Sweden), "The Religious Implications of the Discovery of Time"; Prof. Mariano Artigas (Spain), "The New Cosmology: Does God Have a Purpose for the World?"; Prof. Kenneth Miller (USA), "The Current Debate about Design and its Author"; Prof. Ernan McMullin (USA), "The Origin of the Anthropic Principle in Cosmology"; Prof. John Polkinghorne (UK), "How Does God Act in the World?"; Prof. Thomas Tracy, "The Debate over Divine Action"; Prof. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, "Can Islam Come to Terms with Science?"; Prof. Antonino Zichichi (Switzerland), "The Faith of a Physicist". Those wishing to attend the workshop can apply in writing to Prof. William R. Shea, Institut d'Histoire des Sciences, Université Louis

Pasteur de Strasbourg, 7 rue de l'Université, F-67000 Strasbourg, France; Tel.: 33 390 240580, Fax: 33 390 240581, specifying: full name, address, age and nationality, degree and other academic qualifications, present position and place of work or study and sending a short C.V. The closing date for application is 15 June 2002.

The First World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies to be held in Germany

The First World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) will be held in the city of Mainz, Germany, on 8-13 September 2002. The congress aims to address, explore and exchange information on the state-of-the-art in Middle Eastern Studies in its broadest sense. It will bring together experts from all branches of humanities, social sciences and related disciplines. More than 130 associations, research centers, universities and other institutions from all over the world will convene symposia, plenary sessions, panels, poster presentations, exhibitions, etc. Papers presenting the results of original research and addressing current debates of scholarship will be contributed to the congress, on the following broad themes that are sub-divided each into a large number of specific ones: ancient Middle East; historical approaches in Middle Eastern studies; Islam and modernity; studies on Christianity; urban studies and space; water and environment in the Middle East; economics of the Middle East; politics of the Middle East; gender studies; normative phenomena and legal research; migration studies; media and cultural studies; Middle Eastern studies and academic research in the Middle East; linguistics and literature; nationality, identities and ethnicity. The congress directors are Prof. Günter Meyer, President of WOCMES, Jörn Thielmann, General Secretary of WOCMES. The address of WOCMES Secretariat is: Centre for Research on the Arab World (CERAW), University of Mainz, Institute of Geography, 55099 Mainz, Germany; Tel.: 49 6131 3922846, Fax: 49 6131 3924736, web site: <http://www.wocmes.de>.

IRCICA ACTIVITIES

THE EIGHTH ARCHITECTURAL WORKSHOP AND SYMPOSIUM MOSTAR, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, 9 July – 3 August 2002

Within the framework of its activities aimed at preserving architectural heritage, IRCICA has organised architectural workshops on an annual basis starting from 1994. Scheduled during the summer months and some of them accompanied by seminars and symposia, these workshops have brought together more than five hundred professional architects, scholars and students in total from 25 universities and other institutions in 15 countries. The participants joined efforts towards the planning, design and restoration of the architectural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with frequent references to other historic areas representing the plurality of cultures. These workshops came to be known with the name "Mostar 2004" symbolising the objective of gathering around the historical core of Mostar to be fully restored by then.

This year's program is jointly organised by IRCICA and the City of Mostar in collaboration with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva; the Inter-university Centre, Dubrovnik; the Trust for Mutual Understanding, New York; the World Bank, Washington; the World Monuments Fund, New York; UNESCO, Paris. The program is designed and coordinated by Arch. Prof. Amir Pašić (IRCICA) under the supervision of IRCICA Director General Prof. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu.

The post-war reconstruction of Mostar has been continuous since the end of hostilities in 1994. Throughout this process, the Mostar 2004 program has provided a forum for ideas collected from more than 500 scholars, students, and professionals representing 25 universities and 15 countries. The aim has been consistent: these colleagues seek to support local decision-makers by defining successful strategies and methods to make built and natural heritage sustainable. These efforts have led to the channeling of interest and funding to the city, and have consistently demonstrated that all disciplines associated with the built environment's or its relationship with social and economic

development have a significant role to play in the process of recovery, transition, and revitalisation.

Mostar's post-war revitalisation to date proves, in a most visceral way, that historic places are of the utmost importance to the security, identity, and the health of destabilised communities. This year, with the ongoing help of international community, Mostar is continuing with the battle to preserve its character and simultaneously meet the complex needs of its residents. The Mostar 2004 annual programs - the only annual program of its kind in the former Yugoslavia - provide an opportunity for all individuals and organisations concerned with urban planning, design, and restoration to participate directly in this important process. The value of these programs to the city is not just academic; more than one hundred distinct projects have been completed in a form of studio works, master theses, and doctoral dissertations, and many of these designs were later integrated into funded conservation projects.

Accordingly, the Mostar 2004 annual gathering has emerged as the pre-eminent regional professional forum where scholars, students, and professionals can meet, exchange ideas, and coordinate the development new practical proposals; the solutions developed here are applicable to many other historic urban centers in the Balkans, and the ideas which underlie the solutions have wide relevance to the field of architecture, planning, and preservation in general. Since Mostar is in the process of coping with the same economic, political and demographic changes as all the other war-torn historic cities in the region, a broad, comparative approach to problem - solving is important. In 2002, workshop and symposium activities will be focused on Mostar, Dubrovnik, Kotor, Split and Sarajevo - five key cities in the region whose citizens share a rich history, similar wartime experiences, and common problems in the preservation of heritage.

This Summer, the eighth annual Mostar 2004 workshop and symposium will be organised in the form of the summer school and will involve graduate and diploma students from 17 universities and their professors. In order to generate comments and proposals of the greatest relevance to ongoing reconstruction and development activities in Mostar, the participants will focus on the key urban and architectural sites and concerns currently facing the municipality, including interpretation of the architectural fabric, economically viable restoration and design in context, and utilisation of global communications to support the revitalisation effort. Leading scholars from the allied fields of history, art, architecture, planning, economy, communication technology will discuss key aspects of these topics and address questions posed by student respondents.

The 2002 program will put special attention on two intermingling themes: globalisation and heritage and iconoclastic tradition. Historic places have cycled back to center stage in political terms due to a shift towards intra-state warfare and aggression and ultra-nationalist strategies of demographic engineering. It will generate discussion on Mostar within the iconoclastic tradition to demonstrate that destruction of cultural heritage is a symptom of a larger social trend: the disappearance of the coherent nation-state concurrent with the dissolution of multi-national political blocs; to illustrate through comparison the patterns of both purposeful destruction and collective response, along with their prerequisites; to put Mostar, Babri Mosque (Ayodhya), the World Trade Center, and other destructed monuments into a broader critical context; the dialogue between dominant and subordinate cultures or value systems (punctuated by iconoclastic episodes) and the dialogue between development and conservation.

Invited speakers will prepare papers, which will be posted on the Mostar 2004 web site by the end of June 2002.

The discussion themes are:

1. Studies of architectural fabrics of Dubrovnik, Kotor, Mostar, Sarajevo and Split
2. Restoration of monumental buildings
3. Urban and architectural design in historic areas
4. Sustainable heritage
5. Digital platform
6. Globalisation and heritage
7. Iconoclastic tradition

The speakers will be: Noman Ahmed, Zeynep Ahunbay, Işık Aydemir, Ivo Banac, Judith Bing, Bogdan Bogdanović, Jon Calame, Esther Charlesworth, Mihajlo Crnobrnja, Birgul Çolakoglu, Jerrilynn Dodds, Hilary Ferrone, Muhamed Hamidović, Brooke Harrington, Amra Hažimuhamedović, Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Dino Karabeg, Enes Karić, Terry Knight, Nedžad Kurto, Ilija Lalošević, Jerko Marasović, Tomislav Marasović, Bill Mitchell, Bianca Nardella, Bratislav Pantelić, Amir Pašić, Srećko Pegan, Željko Peković, Attilio Petruccioli, among others.

The participants will work in the following four studios, all related to the real sites or problems, and input data will be prepared till end of June 2002: in the architectural design studio: Millennium Center, Train Station Commercial Center; in the restoration studio: *Napredak* building or Metropolitan Palace or *Vakuf* Palace and Karadjozbey Mosque; in the environmental design studio: North transversal across Carina Bridge; in the design on digital platform studio: North Campus.

Apart from the sessions to be devoted to the listed themes and the studio hours, the workshop program features special sessions on the following themes: "Mostar within Iconoclastic Tradition", "Children and Heritage", "Globalisation and Heritage".

Text prepared by Arch. Prof. Amir Pašić (IRCICA)

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON ISLAMIC ARTS AND CRAFTS
to be held in ISFAHAN, IRAN, 4-9 October 2002

The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran, are jointly organising an International Congress on *Islamic Arts and Crafts*, to be held in Isfahan on 4-9 October 2002.

Preparations for the congress are progressing satisfactorily. A considerable number of applications for participation have been received. Major international organisations involved in the field of arts and crafts, and competent specialists from around the world are expected to attend. The brochure which was circulated earlier to parties concerned will be soon followed by a second brochure, which will include the detailed program of events.

The congress will project the Islamic culture through its arts and crafts by highlighting their beauty and value. In addition, it will suggest ways and means to create favorable conditions for artists and crafts people, conditions which are critical in encouraging them to continue their skills and to transfer them to the next generations. It is essential both for the preservation and the continuity of the cultural heritage of the Muslim world.

It is expected that the congress will discuss important issues related to design and methods used, technical cooperation and developing skills, exchange of practiced techniques, improvement of the quality of production, education and training of skilled artisans, financing, economy, marketing and the obstacles encountered, patronage and national policies. The major objective of this congress is to promote and assist the creation of an awareness of Islamic arts and crafts in the world. It is hoped that it will provide interesting new approaches and possible solutions to some of the major problems facing the future of Islamic arts and crafts development. The event will also be a good opportunity for assessing and determining the prospects of economic, social and cultural development of Islamic arts and crafts in various regions.

Project concept

Towards this end, scholars of history of art, experts, and institutions concerned with Islamic arts and crafts will be brought together in an international congress. This would provide them with the opportunity to pool their knowledge and experience in investigating and assessing the state of arts and crafts, the development achieved, and the methods adopted in different countries for the identification of pertinent issues, problems and prospects. This congress, apart from being a valuable forum for the sharing of experiences between relevant organisations and countries, will also address specific issues for future development in a wide variety of fields. The congress aims to explore major issues that will determine the future directions concerning creativity in Islamic arts and crafts.

Major panels

Over five days, a group of speakers and panels of eminent scholars and specialists in Islamic arts and crafts will present their findings. The congress will discuss the following 24 subject areas related to Islamic arts and crafts:

Main Topic

- 1- Islamic Arts and Crafts: Past, Present and Future

Sub-Topics

- 2- Philosophical interpretation of Islamic arts,
- 3- The role of arts in inter-cultural dialogue.
- 4- Islamic architecture: revival and re-use of the traditional patterns,
- 5- Arts in the Bazaars,

- 6- Illustration of artisans in Islamic traditional textiles,
- 7- Modern modes of education and training in embroidery,
- 8- Modern modes of education and training in the national costumes,
- 9- Art of calligraphy and future developments,
- 10- Rare manuscripts,
- 11- Creativity in miniature painting,
- 12- The art of marbling and paper making: today and future prospects,
- 13- Gilding and binding in the Muslim world,
- 14- The art of wooden works and its development,
- 15- Tiles and ceramics: developments through history and new applications,
- 16- Creative Islamic ornaments on metal craft-works,
- 17- Carpets and "kilim"s and role in the cultural and economic life of Member States,
- 18- The influence of Islamic arts and crafts on European art,

Islamic Arts and Modern Technology

- 19- Limits that Islamic traditional arts can come across in its interaction with modern technology?
- 20- Introduction of Islamic arts and crafts into outside the Muslim world,
- 21- Technical cooperation for developing skills and exchange of applied techniques,
- 22- Role of Government and private agencies for exploring opportunities of growth and preservation of traditional arts and crafts,
- 23- Changing perspectives of Islamic arts in new economic realities: economic and financial factors,
- 24- Marketing difficulties in the field of Islamic arts and crafts.

Paper presentations will be followed by brief reports by countries and specialists and a general discussion.

Aims

The Congress aims to realise the following targets:

- To assess the present state of Islamic arts and crafts in the Islamic world and to determine the economic, social and cultural measures that need to be taken for the future development of this field;
- To discuss measures that can be taken to guard against the loss of Islamic values and traditions with a view towards maintaining the uniqueness of Islamic arts and crafts heritage;
- To encourage young artisans to produce new works;
- To develop a strategy for global cooperation on this subject area.

Expectations

The publication and dissemination of the proceedings of the congress report in English, Arabic, and Persian is expected to be the tangible product and result of the meeting as an immediate contribution. Regional comparative overviews of the state of arts and crafts development are expected to be the output of this meeting. The collection of data and information and the issues, problems and prospects to be highlighted would provide the base line data to develop programs of action and technical assistance in fostering a dynamic strategy for the rehabilitative marketing of arts and crafts. Furthermore, an effort will be made to follow up those proposals for the development of arts and crafts to emanate from the congress.

Participation

Participation will include: OIC Member States, international organisations and institutions working in this field, universities, academicians, scholars of history of arts, policy-makers, planners, arts administrators, artisans, and specialists dealing with these arts, and artisans who will display their own works.

Modes of implementation

Each participating country will nominate one art specialist to present a paper on the present state of the sector. The delegates are required to prepare a country report, which will form the basis of general discussions and provide input for the congress sessions. In addition, each member country will nominate two master artisans along with tools, workshops and exhibits, to be displayed within the activities of the congress. Each country will also contribute color slides, photographs, posters, brochures, books and other materials related to the traditional arts. These materials will constitute the nucleus of a special exhibition of publications on Islamic arts and crafts.

Language

The papers of the congress will be presented in English, Arabic and Persian.

Special Program

The Congress will include, besides other attractions:

1- An International Walk of the participants including the artisans under a slogan entitled: 'Revival and Preservation of the Islamic Cultural Heritage', on Friday, 4 October 2002, Imam Naghsh-e Jahan Square

The main aim is to create an international awareness of the importance of this heritage, as well as highlighting the kinds of danger it faces which affects its existence and necessitate an international collaboration for taking urgent measures to safeguard these important monuments in the world.

2- Exhibition of a set of masterpieces of Islamic arts and crafts

This exhibition will display pieces of excellence in the field of Islamic arts and crafts presenting different types, designs and styles applied in various regions of OIC countries.

3- Artisans as at Work and Pavilions

Artists, skilled crafts people will display their skills and products through country pavilions of arts and crafts - a craft Bazaar to provide interaction between crafts commerce and production. Master artisans from the member states of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) will display their skills, techniques and the excellence of their work in specially designed exhibition pavilions.

Pavilions each of 12x10 feet space is proposed to be provided for participating individual artisans, while pavilions of 10x36 feet each could be provided to country pavilions.

4- Site visits to the workshops of Artisans

The program will include site visits to see artisans-at-work in Isfahan. Master artisans will display skills, techniques, various designs and products of their art works.

5- Exhibition of cultural publications and relevant materials

Other display stalls will include cultural productions, audio and videocassettes, multi-media publications and books on Islamic arts and crafts.

6- A program of cultural tours

Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran, will organize trips to the historical and monument places in Isfahan and some other further sites.

Accommodation

Delegates and participants will be accommodated at major hotels in Isfahan. The organisers will be pleased to assist in bookings. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of the Islamic Republic of Iran shall extend certain facilities for those participants who wish to attend on their own by offering them special discounts and rates in various hotels in Isfahan.

Local transport

The organisers will provide free local transport to all delegations including transport from and to the airport along with transport between the hotel and the congress venue.

Travel discounts

The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran will undertake the necessary contacts and arrangements with Iran Air for providing a special discount to all delegations in all destinations where it operates flight schedules.

Congress Coordinators

International Coordinator	National Coordinator
Dr. Nazeih Taleb MAAROUF Head, Crafts Development Program IRCICA, P.O. Box 24, Beşiktaş 80692, İstanbul, Turkey Fax: 00-90-212-2584365 Tel: 00-90-212-2591742, Ext.: 115 00-90-212-2605988/89	Mr. Hassan AMINIAN Advisor to the President Head of Bureau of International Organisations Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations P.O. Box 15815-3516 Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran Fax: 0098-21- 8833029 Tel: 0098-21-8153526 Mobile: 0098-911-2308314

Text prepared by Dr. Nazeih Maarouf (IRCICA)



**Presentation of a plaque of appreciation to Prof. Halil İnalcık
for his contributions to studies in Ottoman history**



IRCICA has presented a plaque of appreciation to Prof. Dr. Halil İnalcık, Head of the Department of History of Bilkent University, Ankara, in recognition of his contributions to the study of Ottoman history. On this occasion, the Centre convened a small, select gathering of scholars of the field who are working in Turkish universities, on 9 March 2002. The majority of the guests were the authors of the various chapters of IRCICA's publication entitled *History of the Ottoman State, Society & Civilisation* (2

volumes, published in English, Arabic and Turkish editions, edited by E. Ihsanoğlu, English edition with a Preface by Prof. Halil Inalcık). Dr. Taha Akyol, a columnist specialised in history, was also present; his coverage of this meeting was published in the following day's paper. The participants recalled their souvenirs related to their own professors, who were the leading scholars of the field. They exchanged views on the state of research and teaching in Ottoman history in Turkish universities today. In his address of thanks for the plaque, Prof. Dr. Halil Inalcık expressed his appreciation of the progress achieved by IRCICA under the leadership of its Director General Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoğlu, its establishing for itself the tradition of a research institution in Islamic history, and the importance of its international cooperation, in particular with the International Union for the History and Philosophy of Science, through Prof. Ihsanoğlu's Chairmanship of the Union. Then, IRCICA Director General took the floor to underscore the importance of Prof. Inalcık's contributions to research and teaching in Ottoman history. Evoking the major historians of the field having worked in the 20th century, he qualified Prof. Inalcık as the dean of scholars in Ottoman history in the present period and praised his exemplary scholarship. Some of the guests also took the floor, speaking of the characteristics of Prof. Inalcık's works, their joint experiences and memoirs.

Exhibition and lecture on "Tatar Decorative Arts"



Opening: from left, Prof. Guzel Fuad Valeeva-Suleymanova from the Institute of History, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, Prof. Ihsanoğlu, and Ms. Soufia Khabibrakhmanova, Director General of Turan Foundation, Kazan

An exhibition of "Tatar Decorative Arts" was organised at IRCICA jointly with Turan Foundation in Kazan, Tatarstan, for a two-week period starting from 28 January 2002. The Foundation's Director General Ms. Soufia Khabibrakhmanova saw to it, and briefed the visitors on the arts of Tatarstan and the activities of the Foundation. Following the opening of the exhibition, the visitors heard a lecture by Prof. Guzel Fuad Valeeva-Suleymanova, faculty member of the Institute of History, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, on the theme "Islamic Culture of the Volga-Ural Region and Tatar Decorative Applied Arts".

The exhibition comprised samples of leatherwork, including bags, traditional headgear and footwear, glass objects, traditional costumes, carpets, embroideries and illustrations representing the richness and variety of Tatar arts. Ms. Khabibrakhmanova said that Turan Foundation of Kazan was established in 1992 to undertake a wide range of activities related to publishing, training and exhibitions, aimed at reviving and developing the production of goods made in accordance with ancient traditions of crafts. It is noteworthy that the Foundation possesses unique collections of craft works and of books and materials relevant for the



Lecture by Prof. Güzel Valeeva-Suleymanova



study of these crafts. In 2001, the Foundation held a large exhibition at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, on the occasion of the millennium of the city of Kazan. This exhibition at IRCICA was also connected with that anniversary.

The lecture by Prof. Valeeva-Suleymanova, accompanied by a presentation of slides, described the diverse manifestations of the Tatars' creativity in the field of

decorative arts, from monumental architecture and interior decoration to elaborate national costumes. She said that "The work of Tatar craftsmen bring into view the historical development of such arts as patterned weaving, carpet making, chain and gold embroidery, stone and wood carving, inlaying in leather, jewellery, pottery and calligraphy. All these arts have their traditional sets of ornamental forms and motifs, compositional and rhythmic patterns, specific features and pictorial images." Prof. Suleymanova continued: "The decorative art of Tatars is rooted in hoary antiquity. Having advanced along a complicated path of development, it achieved a peculiar synthesis of the medieval art of settled farmers and the early steppe art; it brought together the cottage industries and the crafts, folk culture and professional culture. This accounts for the diversity of its artistic techniques and variable means of artistic expression. All these features are evinced by the best known Tatar crafts such as unique grain and openwork filigree and the polychrome jewellery style, the original leather articles that combine inlay and embroidery, the exquisite gold embroidered towels ..." The exhibition, coupled with the lecture, was highly useful in introducing these arts to visitors from Turkey and abroad.

Lectures

IRCICA hosts public lectures on Saturdays twice a month, from October to June both inclusive, and also at other times on the occasion of visits of scholars, researchers, artists etc. from abroad who are specialised in the Centre's fields of activities. These lectures address a wide range of themes related to culture, art, history of art, history of science, language, literature, the Muslim world, Islamic studies, and connected subjects. They are recorded on cassettes and serve as reference materials. Following are the titles of recent and forthcoming lectures:

- "Stamps used in the Ottoman period", by Garo Kürkman, 2 February 2002
- "Paper and marbled paper", by Hikmet Barutçugil, 16 February 2002
- "Yıldız Palace", by Sabahattin Türkoğlu, 2 March, 3 May 2002
- "The palaces of Istanbul", by Hasan Ali Göksoy, 6 April 2002
- "Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and the Turkish culture", by Beşir Ayvazoğlu, 4 May 2002
- "The theme of adoration in Turkish culture", by Özcan Ünlü, 1 June 2002.

Distinguished visitors at IRCICA

IRCICA was honoured to receive the following guests at its headquarters recently and has the pleasure to quote the impressions they recorded in the Visitors Book:



H.E. Dr. Mohammed al-Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, on 13 February 2002: "I am honoured to be visiting this excellent centre and to take note of the achievements made by our brothers in charge of its immense tasks. We are thankful to Turkey for the patronage it is extending to this important institution. I wish you continuous success and progress." (Original in Arabic)



- Dr. Munzir Salah, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Palestine, on 5 April 2002: "My visit to the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture gave me feelings of relief. It is an institution whose original efforts and initiatives promise to contribute towards a brilliant future for the Muslim world. I would like to express my appreciation for the immense accomplishments which were achieved in a short period of time thanks to the wise and diligent leadership of my brother Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu and his hard-working team. I wish the Director General and his colleagues make continuous progress and permanent success and produce further useful outputs." (Original in Arabic)
- H.E. Dr. Mohammad Said al-Bunni, the Ambassador of Syria in Ankara, on 22 March 2002: "Coincidences are sometimes more beneficial than pre-arrangements. I am honoured to be in this centre today, to get acquainted with the work that has been

- undertaken by the Director General and the staff and to see that they are performing it with enthusiasm. This work certainly contributes in reducing ignorance, encouraging learning, and strengthening the spirit of a harmonious coexistence of all peoples. I wish them continuous success." (Original in Arabic)
- A delegation composed of representatives from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations, Islamic Republic of Iran, visited IRCICA on 28-30 April 2002 for the second preparatory meeting of the International Congress on Islamic Arts and Crafts which will be jointly organised by the Ministry and IRCICA in Isfahan, in October 2002. The delegation was composed of Mr. Jawad Ali Akbarian, Deputy Chairman, Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations, Engineer Murtada Kazemi, Deputy Minister for Arts Affairs, Mr. S. M. Beheshti, Vice Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance and Head of the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organisation, Mr. Hassan Aminian, Advisor to the Chairman of the Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations and National Coordinator of the Isfahan Congress, Dr. Mohamad Reza Hafezi, President of the University of Arts, and Mr. Abolhasan Khalej Monfared, Cultural Counselor, Embassy of Iran in Ankara. Before the opening of the second preparatory meeting, the guests met with the Director General of IRCICA Prof. İhsanoğlu and Dr. Nazeih Maarouf, Head of the Craft Development Program and International Coordinator of the Isfahan Congress, and visited the various departments of the Centre where they received information on the projects and activities. On this occasion, the distinguished guests brought the first copies of the Persian edition of the book entitled *Islamic Civilisation in the Malay World* (edited by Mohd Taib Osman, published in cooperation with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, in 1997) which has been translated from English into Persian by Mohamad Jawad Natiq Pur and published by the Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations, Tehran, 2002. Furthermore, talks were held on the cooperation existing between IRCICA and the various cultural institutions of Iran and the joint activities most of which are aimed at making the Islamic culture and civilization better known in the world, as well as on the preparations for the congress. The members reviewed the stages achieved in the preparations, including the design of the congress' logo, the various publications, brochures, posters, etc., the cultural activities to be held on the occasion of the congress, such as the visits to important sites, the exhibitions, the parades of artisans, etc. The meetings were concluded by the signing of the proceedings and reports.



CULTURAL DATA ON OIC MEMBER COUNTRIES

This section contains brief information reflecting some aspects of cultural life in the OIC member countries. Sets of data drawn from the Centre's data files of statistical indicators and directories of cultural institutions are published here as brief country surveys. The purpose is to disseminate part of the data that is collected for the publications titled International Directory of Islamic Cultural Institutions and Studies on the Cultural Dimensions of Development in the OIC Member States. The statistical authorities of the countries concerned are invited to provide updated information to IRCICA. Summary culture indicators relating to the Republic of Sudan are given below, followed by a list of cultural institutions.

SUDAN

Summary information *

Area	2,376,000 sq. Km.
Population	28,300,000 (1998)
Population density	11 per sq. Km. (1998)
Share of urban population	33 % (1998)
Share of muslim population	90 %
Language	arabic
Adult literacy rate	total: 57 %, male: 68 %, female: 46 %
School enrolment ratios (gross, 1998)	first level: male: 55 %, female: 47 % second level: male: 23%, female: 20 % third level, average: 3 %
Expenditure on education as % of public expenditure	23.9 % (1995-97)
Expenditure on education as % of gnp	8 % (1995-97)
Radio receivers per 1000 people	272 (1997)
Daily newspapers circulated per 1000 people	7 (1998)

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

LEARNED SOCIETIES and RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Central Region Cultural
Centre
POB 274, Wad Medani

Educational Documentation
Centre
POB 2490, Maarif Khartoum

Department of Culture
Ministry of Culture and
Information
POB 291, Khartoum

Department of Religious
Studies
Secretariat General of
Religious Affairs, POB 1856,
Khartoum

Islamic Activities Revival
Committee
POB 320, Omdurman

Islamic African Centre
POB 2469, Khartoum

Khartoum International
Institute for Arabic
Language (ALECSO)
Al-Douyoum al-Charqiya,
POB 26 - Khartoum

National Centre for
Educational Research,
Bakht er Ruda, Institute
of Education
Ducim

National Committee for
Education Science and
Culture
Khartoum

National Council for
Arts and Letters
POB 105, Khartoum

National Council for
Research
POB 2404, Khartoum

Omdurman Islamic
University Research and
Cultural Relations Centre
POB 382, Omdurman

Philosophical Society
POB 526, Khartoum

Union of the African
universities - University of
Khartoum, POB 321
Khartoum

LIBRARIES and ARCHIVES

Central Records Office
Jumhuriya Ave., POB 1914
Khartoum

Antiquities Service, Library
El-Nil Ave. POB 178,
Khartoum

Bakht er Ruda Institute of
Education (Central
Library)
Khartoum

Al – Nilayn University
Library
P.O.Box 1055
Khartoum

Flinders Petrie Library,
Sudan
Antiquities Sciences
POB 178, Khartoum

Higher Teachers Training
Institute Library
Kerreri

The Library of Arabic and
Islamic Studies College
Omdurman

Library of "Al-Jazira"
Research Centre
POB 178, Khartoum

Mabrouka Teachers'
Training
College Library
Khartoum

Municipal Council Library
Wad Medani

Municipal Library
Atbara

National Documentation
Centre

for Science and Technology,
Library, POB 2404,
Khartoum

Omdurman Central Public
Library
POB 189, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Library,
POB 1221, Omdurman

Public Library
POB 19, El Obeid

Public Library
Port Sudan

University of Al-Gezira,
Library
POB 20, Wad Medani

University of Khartoum,
Higher
Teachers' Training
Institute, Library
POB 406, Omdurman

University of Khartoum
Main Library
POB 321, Khartoum

MUSEUMS

Sudan National Museum
POB 178, Khartoum

Ethnographical Museum of
Khartoum
Khartoum University Ave.,
POB 178, Khartoum

Khalifa's House Museum
Omdurman

Merowe Museum
Merowe, Northern Province

Sheikan Museum
El Obeid, El Abyadh

Sudan Natural History
Museum
University of Khartoum, POB
321
Khartoum

UNIVERSITIES and EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Ahfad University College
for
Women (Kulliyet Al-Ahfad
Al-Jamiyyeh Lil-Benet)
POB 167, Omdurman

Al-Nilayn University
Faculty of Arts
POB 1055, Khartoum

College for Arabic and
Islamic Studies
Omdurman

College of Fine and Applied
Arts
POB 407, Khartoum

Institute of Complementary
Studies
POB 1446, Khartoum

Institute of Music, Drama
and Folklore
Khartoum

Omdurman Islamic
University
Faculty of Arts
POB 1221, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Faculty of Economic and
Social Sciences
POB 1221, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Faculty of Education
POB 1221, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Faculty of Islamic Studies
POB 1221, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Faculty of Social Studies
POB 1221, Omdurman

Omdurman Islamic
University
Girls College
POB 1221, Omdurman

University of Juba
POB 82, Southern Region
Juba

University of Khartoum
Faculty of Arts
POB 321, Khartoum

University of Khartoum
Faculty of Education
POB 321, Khartoum

University of Khartoum
Institute of African and
Asian Studies
POB 321, Khartoum

You may wish to visit ircica's renovated and expanded web site:
<http://ircica.org>

Starting from this issue (no. 57), some sections of the *Newsletter*
will be disseminated on-line in the above web site and distributed
by mail to subscribers only.

* Sources: IRCICA, UNESCO, OIC/SESRTCIC

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

MUSEUMS OF ISLAMIC ART

This section introduces two distinguished museum institutions housing valuable collections of Islamic masterpieces. The first one is the Islamic Art Museum Malaysia located in the capital Kuala Lumpur, and the second one, the Museum of Islamic Art annexed to the Benaki Museum, in Athens, Greece.

IRCICA would like to express its most sincere thanks and appreciation to Dr. Mandana Barkeshli, Head of Curatorial Affairs, Islamic Art Museum Malaysia and his colleagues, for having kindly prepared and forwarded the below article (in three languages: English, French and Arabic) and illustrations for publication in IRCICA Newsletter.

IRCICA is also thankful to Prof. Asngelos Delivorrias, Director, Benaki Museum, Athens, for the brochure entitled "The Creation of the Museum of Islamic Art in Athens. A new annex of the Benaki Museum" and complementary information, on the basis of which the below article was prepared.

THE ISLAMIC ARTS MUSEUM MALAYSIA (IAMM)

Background of the IAMM

The success of the World Islamic Civilisation Festival, which held in Kuala Lumpur in 1994, showed the compelling need to establish a permanent center of learning and research to preserve the history, arts, and cultural heritage of the Islamic World. The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia was officially opened on 13 December 1998, born from the efforts of the Albukhary Foundation, with the assistance of the Malaysian government and the Islamic Religious Department of the Federal Territories of Malaysia (JAKIM).

Nestled amidst lush greenery on a gently sloping hill, the Islamic Arts Museum is located within the parameters of the city centre of Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur. It is also situated beside the National Mosque and the most beautiful gardens of the city. With an area of more than 22,000 m², the Museum houses some of the most precious and timeless works of Islamic arts reflecting the achievements and aspirations of one of the greatest civilisations in the history of mankind. Exhibits in the custody of the Museum comprise of private collections that are loaned, bequeathed or acquired.

One of the Museum's objectives is to become the custodian, preserver, restorer and educator of Islamic arts for future generations. To this purpose, the Museum is now in the first phase of developing its conservation centre, notably with the help of Siemens (M) Sdn. Bhd. and the consultation services of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

The Museum Values and Philosophy

The design of the building reflects the essence of Islamic spirituality, combined with the functional, structural style of contemporary museums. At the entrance, a beautiful stylised arch, reminiscent of the *Iwan*, the traditional mosque gateway is inscribed with verse 20 of the *Surah al-Ankabut* (part 29) of the Quran: "Travel through the earth and see how Allah originates the Creation. Moreover! Allah will cause a later creation to grow. Indeed! Allah has the power over all things!" This proclamation embraces the attainment of knowledge through travel and suggests that a visit to the Museum is a virtual journey through the exotic destinations of Islamic land, geographic boundaries and time notwithstanding.

At the "Rehal terrace" facing the auditorium of the Museum, a carved stone book-holder (*rehal*) carries two lines of poetry from Saadi, the great Iranian poet. It reads "All men are members of the same body, created from one essence. If fate brings suffering to one member, the others cannot stay at rest". This sentence is also symbolically written on the United Nations building entrance and asserts the international stance taken by the IAMM.

Water, light and space are also three fundamental guiding principles of the Museum architecture. The Museum mirrors the Islamic ideal of paradise with a fountain garden, views of verdant greenery, whilst glass walls allow for natural light to filter into the building and provides a vibrant view of the city skyline.



The Museum shop



The Museum's fountain garden



The inverted dome of the IAMM (interior)



The main dome of the Museum

One of the structural highlights of the Museum building are its five interior domes symbolising the pillars of Islam. The product of Uzbekistani craftsmanship, the four domes are painted in warm tones of terracotta, blue and lavender, with gilt detailing. The inverted dome, however is pure white, adorned with elegantly carved coiling arabesque tendrils relieved by two rows of mirror and gilt cartouches. The rim of the dome is adorned with a gilded inscription of the opening verse of the Quran, the *Surah al-Fatihah*.



The entrance to the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



The Ottoman room (Syria, c. 1820 – 1821)

The Collections

The exhibition space of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia differs from most museums as the galleries are housed in a vast open area. The elimination of spatial division permits uninterrupted movement from one exhibition space to the next, inspiring a sense of continuity embodied in the Islamic spirit.

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia has two floors of permanent galleries and two special galleries for temporary exhibitions. The permanent galleries are categorised by artefact material or field of study. Located on Level 3 of the IAMM are some exceptions, the India Gallery, China Gallery and Malay World Gallery. These three galleries serve as representations of the diversity of Islamic peoples and the multi-cultural heritage of Malaysia.

Also located on Level 3 are the Architecture Gallery, the Qurans and Manuscripts Gallery and the Ottoman Room - a reconstructed interior of an Ottoman Syrian room dated 1820 - 1821 AD, sponsored by the Standard Chartered Bank. On Level 4, there are the Ceramics and Glass Gallery, Metalwork Gallery, Coins Gallery, Woodwork Gallery, Arms and Armour Gallery, Jewellery Gallery, and Textiles Gallery; exhibit collections are displayed thematically, according to chronology, region or technique of production.

Architecture Gallery

The Architecture Gallery houses a collection of scale-built models of prominent architectural structures from the Middle East to Southeast Asia, offering a comparison of styles and designs of Islamic regions. Also exhibited are fragments of architectural ornamentation, namely tiles and carved wooden panels, and information panels tracing the development of architecture in the Islamic world.

Qurans and Manuscripts Gallery

The Qurans and Manuscripts Gallery features a collection of religious and secular texts from all over the Islamic world. The Quran copies and manuscripts are exhibited by provenance, emphasising the variations in calligraphic script, decorative styles, materials and methods of binding that occur from region to region.



From the IAMM collections: an early 13th century folio of a Quran copy from Andalusia (23 x 21 cm.) and a Quran copy from China dated 1730 (28 x 19,5 x 2 cm.)

One of the oldest calligraphic pieces is a 8th – 9th century Abbasid Quran copy leaf on vellum written in Kufic script. Examples of secular texts include Iranian marriage certificates, royal decrees, significant legal documents and texts related to the fields of science, law, philosophy, literature, medicine, astronomy, astrology as well as illuminated letters and poetry by some of the most renown calligraphers of Iran.

India Gallery

The India Gallery is devoted to highlighting the artefacts of the glorious Indian empire, with particular attention paid to the art of the Mughal dynasty (16th – 19th century), one of the most magnificent and enduring empires of Islamic history. Among the pieces featured are a dazzling array of jewellery including a collection of archer's rings; arms and armour, inlaid wooden boxes, metalwork, copies of the Quran, manuscripts and folios of miniature paintings.

China Gallery

Strong trade links between China, Southeast Asia and the Muslim world created availability and demand for Chinese wares and there was a far-reaching influence of Chinese decorative styles. Dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the Chinese Muslims, the China gallery exhibits a varied range of Chinese Islamic artefacts, drawing parallels, differences and influences of style in Chinese Islamic arts to the rest of the Muslim world. This gallery exhibits a collection of Chinese Islamic calligraphic scrolls, 19th century gilded cloisonné incense burners and illuminated copies of the Quran dating from the Qing dynasty.

Malay Gallery

Islam came to this region through merchants and travellers moving eastwards via the Silk Road and sea from the Arabian Peninsula and India. Trade winds brought merchants from both the West and the East, congregating in Melacca on the West Coast of the Malay Peninsula which was to become a major centre for trade and cultural exchange in the 15th century. In addition settlers from China and India brought with them their artistic traditions which were gradually modified and assimilated into the art of the indigenous population.

The gallery and its exhibits are organised to showcase a range of artefacts comprising of utilitarian household items, textiles, costumes, betelnut accessories, jewellery, woodwork, arms and armour, Quran copies in Malay, secular manuscripts and coins, mainly from the Southern Philippines, the Indonesian Archipelago, the island of Borneo, Patani (Southern Thailand) and Peninsular Malaysia.

Jewellery Gallery

In most cultures, jewellery often serves a ceremonial function as well as a defining role in communicating one's wealth, rank, social status and aesthetic preference. The wealth and patronage of many Islamic dynasties as well as the artistic ingenuity of traditional tribal communities sparked the production of magnificent personal adornments. A large portion of the jewellery on display at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia originate from India, Iran, Syria and Central Asia.

Arms and Armour Gallery

The Arms and Armour Gallery highlights a varied range of weaponry from the Islamic world each defined by its form, material and decorative style. From symbols of office to daily utilitarian utensils to mechanisms of battle, arms and armour in the Islamic world were often watered, inlaid, gemset, enameled, carved of jade, bone or ivory to create spectacular works of art. The collection also features an inscribed Ottoman linen talismanic tunic, inlaid Ottoman flintlock pistols and Safavid gun accessories.

Textile Gallery

Clothing is considered an important part of Islamic art as it was used to indicate a person's gender, age, marital status, place of origin, social status, profession and religious affiliation. The Textile Gallery of the Islamic Arts Museum features a range of shawls, hangings, costumes, saddles, horse blankets, head dresses, doorway panels and tent bags from around the Muslim world; highlighting the different materials and techniques of decorative embellishment.

Woodwork Gallery

This section of the museum houses a small though expanding display, including a collection of mother of pearl and tortoiseshell inlaid woodwork of Ottoman Turkey, ivory inlaid woodwork of India and the delicate micro-mosaic woodwork (*khatamkari*) of Iran and Spain. An extension of this gallery is devoted to a small collection of Iranian and Indian lacquer ware.

Coins Gallery

Though one of the smallest display areas in the museum, this space contains a substantial collection of coins from varied dynasties and regions. Among the oldest coins in the collection is an Umayyad gold *dinar* minted in 699 AD, during the reign of the 5th caliph, Abd-al-Malik ibn Marwan (r. 685 – 705 AD).

Metalwork Gallery

The metalwork gallery of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia highlights the innovation of the techniques of metalwork embellishment, the vast range of materials used in its decoration and provides a comparison of the different forms and styles typical to Islamic provenances and dynasties. The gallery also features collections of Mamluk, Qajar and Ottoman metalwork with a section on the various paraphernalia of the Islamic astronomical sciences.

Ceramics Gallery

The ceramics of the IAMM Gallery are organised to present an overview of the different types of pottery in the Islamic world from the utilitarian products of common households, to commissioned royal pieces, to trading wares. It also aims to provide an insight to the different techniques of ceramic decoration and the periods in which these styles and motifs were popular.

Facilities

Some of the facilities offered by the museum include an auditorium, a café, restaurant, children's library, a fountain garden, education workshops, a patron's lounge, volunteer lounge and a museum shop. The Museum provides public amenities for the disabled such as wheelchairs, ramps and handicapped parking areas.

Programs

To introduce the younger generation to diverse forms of art and culture whilst promoting artistic creativity, guided tours and 'Museum Safari' activities are held in the galleries and the children's library currently conducts workshops each Saturday, with a story telling and craft session based on a weekly theme.

Other educational programs are also conducted at the workshop areas of the Museum every Saturday, by calligraphers of the National Calligraphic Association (*Persatuan Seni Khat Kebangsaan, PSKK*).

Seminars and lectures are regularly organised in conjunction with events at the Museum. The Museum is also associated with other cultural events outside the sphere of Islamic art such as a Japanese Film Festival in March 2001 and 'Hidden Japan' a black and white photography exhibition, held in October 2001.

Temporary Exhibitions

The Museum has committed itself to presenting two major exhibitions and four minor exhibitions annually. The following are a few examples of major exhibitions held since the official opening of the museum:

The exhibition "Dress for the Body, Body for the Dress" (June 2000 - September 2000) presented a collection of 124 rare costumes belonging to the Stibbert Museum of Florence, Italy; drawing comparisons between the evolution of European and Islamic dress. It featured suits of armour and civilian dress dating back to the late 15th century, but the greatest curiosity of this exhibition was a 16th century steel corset. The exhibition disclosed some interesting facts and dispelled a few myths, demonstrating that, while the European world looked at the body as being meant to conform to restrictive and confining shapes, the Muslim world made dress to conform to the body.

The IAMM also held a unique exhibition entitled "The Sacred Art of Marriage – Persian marriage certificates of the Qajar dynasty" (December 2000 to March 2001), to commemorate the museum's second anniversary. A collection of 74 illuminated Iranian marriage certificates, largely from the Iran National Archive Organisation, was for the first time exhibited outside Iran. Apart from their aesthetic value, these certificates provided viewers an insight into the sociological, economic and cultural traditions of the Qajar period (18th - 19th century AD).

The "The Art of Living" (March 2001 – September 2001) was an exhibition featuring a collection of photographic works by Ovidio Guaita; highlighting a rich diversity of architectural edifices and façades of different regions inspired by the Islamic style. The exhibition was supplemented with the museum's publication of the same title, equipped with a wealth of colour photographs, detailed architectural sketches and charming anecdotes. The far-reaching influence of Islamic culture was apparent in the images of the lordly dwellings featured in this historical, geographical and cultural documentary.

The most recent exhibition of the Museum (July 2001 - October 2001) displayed the cultural artefacts of the Chinese Muslims from the 14th to 20th century representing the ten ethnic Chinese Muslim minorities. The "Six Centuries of Islamic Arts in China" exhibition, was the result of a collaborative work with the Museum of Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing and the North West Minorities University in Lanzhou. The exhibitions aimed at providing an insight into the coming of Islam to China, the comparative influences of Chinese and Islamic Art, Chinese Islamic decorative techniques and the significance of Chinese symbolism.

From March - June 2002, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia holds the 'Islamic Art of India' exhibition, in collaboration with the National Museum New Delhi, India with the support of the High Commission of India in Malaysia. Featuring artefacts from the Sultanate and Mughal dynasties, the exhibits chronologically cover the salient features, artistic achievements and the influences that led to the flourishing arts of India. The exhibition is further supplemented with a catalogue that will capture the accounts of historical events and personalities in a by-gone era of dazzling grandeur and splendour.

In July 2002, the IAMM in a joint effort with the National Museum of Iran, will showcase its next exhibit: Manifestations of the *Shahnameh* (The Book of Kings), one of the greatest epics of classical literature. Written by the Iranian poet Firdawsi, the almost 60,000 verse long epic is composed in Persian and was finished in the year 1010 AD. The *Shahnameh* tells the story of the creation of the Iranian people prior to their Islamisation in the 7th century. In addition to manuscripts, the exhibition will also comprise of other artefacts that display illustrations from the *Shahnameh*. Besides the artistry of the works from both the visual and literary viewpoint, it will also focus on the influence of Persian miniature art and the *Shahnameh* as a source of inspiration in other fields of art and throughout Islamic history.

The Future of the IAMM

In the past three years since its official opening, the Museum has rapidly developed into a centre of education, heritage preservation and cultural exchange. Through its activities it will continue in its dedicated efforts to impart knowledge, and to foster global understanding and an appreciation of the arts, cultures and lifestyles of Islamic civilisations.

THE MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART AT THE BENAKI MUSEUM, ATHENS

The Benaki Museum stands out among Greek museums not only for its extensive Greek collections but also for the wealth and quality of its collections of Islamic art. It is a private museum administrated by an independent Board of Trustees and self-supportive through private donations, but recognised by the State for its prominence among Greek museums and constitutionally granted a preferential legal status.

Establishment of the Museum

The Benaki Museum was founded in 1930 by Antonis Benakis (1873-1954) who was born in Alexandria, Egypt into a prominent Greek family. Antonis Benakis began to acquire his collections in Egypt during the first decades of the 20th century and later donated them by establishing a museum in Athens, in 1926, in the former home of the Benaki family, a fine neoclassical building of the early 20th century. His initiative was met enthusiastically by the Greek public, and the number of the Museum's treasures increased rapidly. It continues to be the recipient of considerable donations which gradually complete the collection and strengthen the capacity of the Museum for scholarly research. The Museum is also remarkable for its scientific and educational output and its cooperation with counterpart institutions both at home and abroad.

The Benaki Museum's collections of Islamic art spanning thirteen centuries are of great historical importance and contain some unique objects. The founder, Antonis Benakis recognised the significance of Islamic civilisation. His upbringing in Alexandria exercised a strong influence upon him. He discerned the close relationship between the Greek and Islamic civilisations arising from their geographical proximity and their often parallel historical development. It is indeed remarkable how frequently the objects he collected correspond to those phases of encounters between the Islamic and Greek civilisations.

Premises

The Benaki Museum began in 1973 to work out a program for the extension of its buildings. It also undertook studies to improve the displaying of its collections, with mainly three specific considerations: the uniqueness of the objects in the collection, the conviction that this material had to be made more widely known, and an awareness of the importance of Islamic culture. The scholarly study and the cataloguing of the Islamic collections were put in hand with the more particular and immediate objective of promoting Islamic studies in Greece, such studies being still in their infancy despite the close historical ties binding the two cultures together. The first volume of a ten-volume catalogue of the collections has already appeared; it is devoted to early Islamic pottery of the 9th to 12th centuries and was written by Helen Philon. The series will be completed with the publication of successive volumes.

Provision was made, within the framework of the Benaki Museum's new buildings program which began to take shape in 1988, for the separate display of the Islamic collections in an annex to the Museum situated in central Athens. The primary aim of the scheme is to make Islamic artistic creation widely known and enable the Museum to function simultaneously as a Centre for the Study of Islamic Civilisation. For this purpose, the materials will be easily accessed and properly documented in accordance with international scientific and museological criteria.

The new premises allocated to the Museum of Islamic Art consist of a neo-classical complex of buildings in Kerameikos, situated at the historic centre of Athens. In its neighbourhood, there are

important archaeological sites, such as the Doric temple of Hephaistos (the Theseion) and the Museum of the ancient Kerameikos necropolis. The complex consists of two houses, one of three storeys and the other of two, and occupies a single plot of nearly 800 m². The Directorate of Special Works of the Ministry of the Environment, Town Planning and Public Works undertook in 1996, as part of the program for the redevelopment of Kerameikos district, to carry out work to reinforce the two buildings and to strengthen the ornamental features of their frontages. During this preservation work a section of the ancient wall of Athens and an ancient tomb were uncovered at the level of the houses' foundations. It was decided that these finds should remain *in situ* and be made accessible to visitors, and the necessary arrangements were made accordingly.

*The Islamic art collection**

The Benaki Museum's Islamic collections contain more than 8000 items of ceramic art, metalwork, jewellery, weaving, wood-carving, glassware, small but important groups of bone objects, inscribed tombstones, glass weights, arms and armour, smaller lots of metal and wooden seals, ceramic filters, etc. The Museum also possesses a marble-lined reception hall of a 17th-century Cairo mansion. Taken together, these exhibits will provide a total view of the continuity of Islamic history from the early Islamic period to Ottoman times and of the development of Islamic art up to the 19th century.

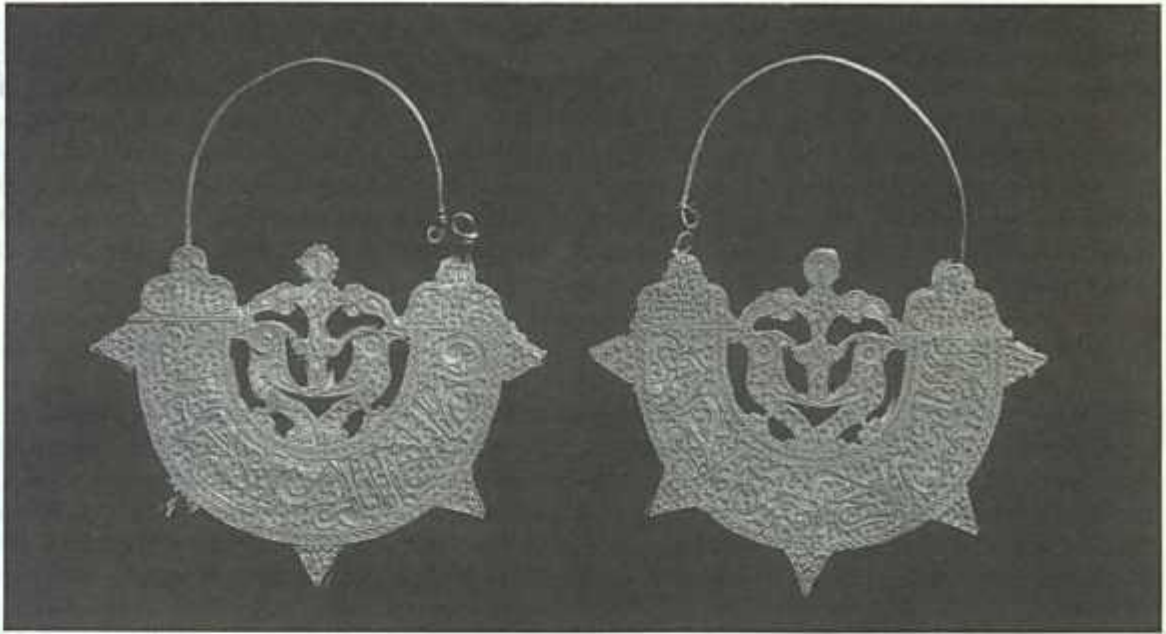
The collections of Islamic art are displayed in the new museum together with the greater part of the Coptic art collection which comprises objects produced in Egypt between the 4th and the 8th centuries. The collection of Coptic art contains about 1000 ceramic, wood-carved and bronze items and a large textile collection which is remarkably comprehensive and of unique quality.



From the Museum's collection: Velvet saddle-cloth woven with gold and silver thread, Bursa (Turkey), second half of 16th century (photo reproduced from the Museum's brochure)

Pottery objects account for the greater part of the Islamic collection and number around 3500 items, complete or fragmentary. Notable for its quality is a group of ceramics painted in luster. The technique of luster painting was a contribution by the Muslim world to ceramic decoration. Among the rare examples in the Benaki collection is an early piece painted in polychrome luster originating in Abbasid Iraq. Another group of ceramic objects dates to the 10th and 11th centuries, the peak period of Fatimid pottery. The decorations include scenes drawn from both everyday and court life and realistic representations of humans and animals. The importance of this group is enhanced by a series of ceramics bearing the signatures of known artists such as Muslem and Sa'ad. The Mamluk period is represented by objects with the emblems of office-holders and with decorative motifs influenced by Chinese art. The collection also contains important examples of Persian ceramic art belonging to every phase of its development.

* Text extracted and reproduced from the Museum's publications.



Gold earrings with a scene of the Tree of Life, Spain, late 12th century (photo reproduced from the Museum's brochure)

The collection of jewellery includes about 500 pieces, including finger-rings, bracelets, earrings, pectorals, amulets, necklaces, brooches and belts. One of the oldest and rarest jewels in the collection is a section of a 10th-century gold belt, thought to have come from Samarra in Iraq. The regions of Syria, Egypt and Greater Iran from the 11th to the 14th centuries are represented by a large quantity of jewellery. The most typical examples are items dating to the Fatimid period. The collection includes a famous example from Omeiad Spain: a pair of 12th-century earrings with a scene of the Tree of Life, birds and inscriptions. An integral group with a character of its own is the collection of 19th-century jewellery from Qajar Iran. These jewels reflect the pervasive influence exercised upon Iran at that time by Western European and Russian works of art.

The Museum also has a collection of woodcarvings comprising about 700 items, most of them found in Egypt whose dry climate favours the preservation of wood. Early woodcarvings in the collection combine ornamental features drawn from the repertoire of classical antiquity and pre-Islamic Persia. A rare but representative example is the magnificent 8th-century door from the region of Baghdad, one of the earliest surviving instances of Islamic woodcarving. A distinct group consists of 9th-century woodcarvings in which there first appears the so-called Samarra style that was widely diffused throughout Egypt at the time of the Tulunids. Woodcarvings with vegetal themes and animal figures stand out among objects belonging to the Fatimid period, as do examples inscribed with benedictions or passages from the Quran, in which the Kufic script is the dominant ornamental feature. The later phase of Islamic woodcarving is represented by works displaying complex geometric configurations, inlaid decoration and abstract plant compositions, typical of the mature period of Islamic arabesque art.

As to the collection of metalwork, it comprises about 1000 items illustrative of every period of Islamic art. The greater part of the collection consists of brass objects with inlaid decoration of silver and gold, which originated in Syria, Jazira and Egypt. Inlays of precious material transformed these works from common base metal ware into luxury goods that appealed in particular to the courts of rulers and to the wealthy classes. Prominent among them are a casket of 617 A.H./1220 A.D., the earliest known signed product of a craftsman working in Mosul, and a candlestick of 728 A.H./1317-18 A.D. dedicated to an unnamed ruler of Jazira. There are unique examples of silverware of the

Fatimid period. The later phase of Islamic metalwork is represented by bronze and copper objects from Egypt, Syria and Iran. Outstanding among them are the Safavid objects of the 16th and 17th centuries finely incised with arabesque designs. Medical and astronomical instruments also have a place in the collection. The famous bronze astrolabe bearing the signature of Ahmad ibn al-Sarraj and the date 729 H. / 1328-29 AD is the only known example of a universal astrolabe that has survived. The collection also includes an important group of coin weights and jar stamps from the Umayyad to the Fatimid periods.

The collection of glass comprises of about 700 objects including a large number of fragments. The glass industry was already flourishing in the lands which were conquered by the Arabs during the seventh century. During the early period (7th-12th centuries) new techniques were introduced and old ones were refined. This period is characterised by moulded, engraved, stained and enameled decoration. Of special importance is the flask of colourless glass datable to the 12th century, possibly from Egypt. The middle period (13th-15th centuries) is represented almost exclusively by enameled and gilded glass. The largest part of this group consists of fragments, from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. Mosque lamps, the most spectacular achievement of this period, is represented here by the lamp from the tomb of the Mamluk Sultan al-Qalawun (r. 1341-1342).

The textile collection contains about 700 woven items. One particular group consists of fragments from Fustat (Old Cairo). Among them are block-printed fabrics imported from India from as early as the 14th century, as well as pieces of carpets. Of special interest are the inscribed fabrics (*Tiraz*) of the Abbasid and Fatimid periods on which the Kufic script is used in an impressive manner. *Tiraz* in the possession of the Benaki Museum provide important information about the names and titles of caliphs and high officials, about textile workshop overseers and craft workers, and the centers of textile production. Silk fabrics and embroideries, mostly dated to the time of the Mamluks, represent Egypt and Syria in the later period. A rich category is comprised of Persian velvet and silk fabrics made in the time of the Safavids and Qajars. They were highly prized in the West.

The collection of Ottoman art

Works of art belonging to the Ottoman period constitute one of the richest collections in the Benaki Museum. The groups of Iznik pottery and Bursa silks are particularly important and include some of the most famous 16th- and 17th-century works of Ottoman art. The collection contains a wealth of comparative material for the study of the arts of the diverse peoples who lived under Ottoman rule. There are around 320 items of Iznik pottery. The Bursa silks number about 100 pieces. Two of the better known and rarer items are an unused velvet saddle-cloth and a silk *kaftan* similar to some of the kaftans preserved in Topkapı Palace Museum. The silverware and jewellery cover a period from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Among these items are objects with fine Ottoman decoration typical of the period of Suleyman the Magnificent, as well as later objects.

The collection of Coptic art

The Museum's Coptic collection includes a unique and extremely rich group of textiles. The documentation and presentation of these fabrics on Internet enable specialists and researchers anywhere to access them. The blending of elements of local Egyptian tradition and of the Greco-Roman civilisation with vigorous newer elements of the Christian religion is very clearly reflected in the textiles belonging to this particular collection. The stress laid on ornament, the stylisation of the human figure, the emphasis on rendering local subjects, such as Nile landscapes, and above all the expressive immediacy of the scenes are features that distinguish Coptic from other contemporary artefacts. Articles of metalwork and wood-carved objects are representative of Egyptian products once widely traded, chiefly in the 5th and 6th centuries.

Glass of the Sultans Exhibition

From 20 February to 15 May 2002, the Benaki Museum hosts an international exhibition of approximately 150 glass objects. The collection represents the development of glass craftsmanship in various parts of the Muslim world, from the 7th to the 19th century. The exhibition is organised by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the Corning Glass Museum (New York) with the Benaki Museum as the only host throughout Europe. The "Glass of the Sultans" was first displayed in the Corning Glass Museum from 24 May 2001, and on 2 October it was transferred to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The collection includes representative specimens of all types of pre-industrial glassware from Egypt, the Middle East and India. A separate section comprises of European glassware that were directly influenced by Islamic patterns or manufactured for sale in the eastern markets. Most of the objects originated in the lands of modern day Iraq, Iran, Syria and Egypt; they include luxurious objects made for the sultans, as well as objects for everyday use (see *Newsletter* no. 55, August 2001). Organised thematically and chronologically, the exhibition exemplifies each major category of glass (blown glass, mosaic glass, cut and engraved glass, gilt and painted glass). A fully illustrated catalogue of the exhibition is published in English and Greek editions.

With this event, Benaki Museum also aims to project its activities to the Greek and international public and to invite financial/material support from institutions and personalities world-wide towards facilitating and expediting the establishment of the Museum of Islamic Art that will simultaneously function as a Centre for the Study of Islamic Civilisation. The Museum will appreciate contributions in this regard.

IRCICA Publications available on CD-ROM

The Centre produced revised and updated CD-ROM copies of its following publications which are now out of stock:

- **International Directory of Islamic Cultural Institutions* (fourth edition published in 1991)
- **Ottoman Yearbooks (Salnames and Nevvals)* (published in 1982)
- * the Guidebook to *Ottoman Archives* (published in 1986)
- * *The Muslim Pious Foundations and Real Estates in Palestine* (published in 1982), and
- * the issues no. 20 – 40 of the Newsletter.

CD-ROM copies of the above publications can be obtained at request from IRCICA for US\$ 10.- each.

BOOK SURVEY

El Hassan bin Talal, **Continuity, Innovation and Change. Selected Essays**, Majlis El Hassan, The Royal Court, Amman, 2001, viii+100 pp.

H.R.H. El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan prepared this book while he was a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, from 15 September 2000 till 30 June 2001. The book contains ten selected essays written between 1984-2000. In a world of increasing globalisation and increasing diversity in human society, the question is how peoples of various ethnic, religious and cultural origins may come to know and understand each other. The author states that through interfaith and intercultural dialogue in regard to the commonalities and differences of mankind we can reach mutual comprehension of one another that leads to a "global ethos of understanding." The author notes that the underlying philosophy of the book is presented in the first and the last chapters, recommending that the reader starts with these. The opening chapter underlines certain concepts which are part of the author's personal vision and which he has tried, over the past 30 years, to turn into concrete realities. These are *humanitarianism*, the need for a *culture of peace*, an emphasis on *dialogue*, recognition of the importance of *knowledge* and *innovation*. The author invites everyone to join him in his efforts towards establishing a world in which dialogue, cooperation and peace prevail and in which individuals can develop without any kinds of prejudice, intolerance or oppression. In the tenth and last chapter, "Imagination", the author underlines the importance of imagination noting that great achievements are almost always inspired by a great imagination. This chapter also indicates the role of imagination in the myths, epics, sagas, fables, folktales and similar works. He notes that human beings who use imagination to fight evil-violence, aggression, man's inhumanity to man and man's cruelty to his environment should not be regarded as dreamers. Chapters 2 to 9 have the following titles: Islam and Civil Society, Tradition and Modernity in Islam, A Pragmatic Approach to

Fundamentalism, Nuclear Weapons and Regional Conflicts: An Islamic View, The Future of the Middle East, Manpower Migration in the Middle East: An Overview, Holistic Development for the 1990s, Human Development in Jordan. Indexes of subjects, names and foreign terms complete the book. It contains inspiring judgments ensuing from the author's broad vision and his experience as a statesman, scholar and promoter of international and intercultural cooperation.

Name-i Aşina. Ortak Kültür Mirasının Arayışında (In search of common cultural legacy), periodical publication of the Cultural Counsellor's Office of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ankara, Fall 2001 issue (in Turkish and Persian)

Name-i Aşina published by the Cultural Counselor's Office of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Ankara, Turkey, is a praiseworthy journal not only because it is aimed at making known and developing further the cultural relations between the Iranian and Turkish peoples, but also for the quality of its contents. The journal contains articles on cultural and literary subjects of common interest for the two countries. It has sections introducing the cultural and academic institutions of Iran and Turkey and recent publications and Internet sites related to Persian language and literature. The Fall 2001 issue (year 3, no. 1) has the keynote article by Mr. Abolhasan Khalej Monfared, Cultural Counselor and Chief Editor of the journal. The article gives a concise outline of the cultural exchanges which took place between the two peoples during the Seljukid period in Iran, when scientific, scholarly, artistic and literary activities (in Persian and Arabic) were at the height of their progress, and of the later period which saw the development and expansion of Persian culture, language and literature in the Ottoman capital and throughout its territory under the protection and patronage of the sultans. The article then reviews the progress achieved in the cultural cooperation between Iran and Turkey during the 20th century, both



within the framework of official agreements and via cooperation between research centres and institutes. The keynote article of this issue is followed by sections on: first, the text of the speech delivered by H.E. Syed Muhammed Khatami, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, at UNESCO on 19 December 1999, in which the President exposed the theory of the Dialogue of Civilisations in light of the international initiative he had taken and which led to the proclamation, by the United Nations, of 2001 as the Year of Dialogue Between Civilisations". This is followed by the articles entitled "The establishment of political agreement between the Turkish, Iranian and Greek peoples under the Anatolian Seljuks" by Mikail Bayram, "Cami's 'Erbain' and Turkish editors who published the 'Fourty Hadith'" by Asgar Dilberipur, "The Yesevi sect and its role in the spread of Islam in Central Asia" by Mehdi Senai, "A glimpse at the contemporary Iranian story-writing" by Muhammed Hukukî. After these articles, there is the part entitled "Memorable Figures" where the reader finds a biography of Dr. Abdulhuseyn-i

Zerrinkub, followed by the part on "Cultural Centres" introducing the Astan-i Kuds cultural centre in Khorasan and the Hacı Bektaş Veli Turkish Culture Research Centre affiliated to Gazi University in Ankara, the section entitled "Cultural Report" with brief news on cultural and artistic events, and the "Presentation of Books and Internet Sites". *Name-i Aşina* welcomes contributions by researchers and authors from around the world working in fields related to its purview. The correspondence address is: Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Office of the Cultural Counselor, Reşit Galip Cad. No. 77, Gaziosmanpaşa, Ankara, Turkey; Fax: 90.312.4480052; Tel.: 90.312.4480050; e-mail: iran-cultural-house@tr.net.

ISTAC Illuminated. A Pictorial Tour of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), Kuala Lumpur, Architectural and Interior Design, Drawings and Calligraphy by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, written and compiled by Sharifah Shifa al-Attas, ISTAC, Kuala Lumpur, 1998

ISTAC Illuminated, a large-size and colourful book, is a portrait and celebration of Kuala Lumpur's International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC). It provides a

pictorial tour of the institute. It is a kind of guided tour of ISTAC and all that it has to offer. It begins with an examination of the philosophy and intentions of Founder-Director Professor Dr. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, and an account of the conception and founding of ISTAC. Then is displayed the physical fabric of the buildings, their exterior and interior, setting and furnishings. The book reveals also many of the manuscripts kept in ISTAC's important library and many historical and beautiful objects contained in its collection of

artifacts. After the introductory texts follows a brief portrait of al-Attas, his personal characteristics and his philosophy. The Institute's relation to his ideas and vision are described in the first chapter. The bulk of the photographs, which display a high artistic quality, are presented in the second and third parts of the book. A separate section is reserved to the mosque, due to its importance as a place of prayer and a center of activity. The final section describes the contents of ISTAC's library, with a sub-section concerning historical artifacts in ISTAC's possession. Here one finds sample photographs of pages from rare Islamic manuscripts, from earliest and rare printings in Arabic, Malay, Latin, Persian, Turkish etc. as well as miniatures and drawings. The book as a non-academic work is intended to appeal not only to the scholar but also the general reader. It is replete with examples of sketches, drawings and calligraphy by al-Attas. Several details from ornamentations, floral motifs, furniture and sculptures that are part of the Institute's architectural features are provided as well. The Appendices part at the end of the book is highly useful, as it contains an overview of ISTAC's activities, publications, the seminars it organised, and the visitors it received from around the world. This publication reflects the institutional achievement represented by ISTAC. Prof. Dr. Syed Naquib Al-Attas, Founder-Director of ISTAC, was presented the IRCICA Award for Excellence in Research in 2000, on the occasion of IRCICA's twentieth anniversary, in recognition of his services as a scholar, philosopher and educator in the fields of Malay language and culture and Islamic civilisation.

(prepared by Ali Çaksu)

Dünyada Yayınlanmış Osmanlı ile ilgili Eserler (Toplu Katalog) / Publications Related to Ottoman Heritage in the World (Union Catalogue), The Presidency of National Library, Ankara, 2000, 2 volumes, xxii + 478, 479-819 + clxviii pp. (in Turkish and English)

This impressive book resulted from a huge effort aimed at preparing a union catalogue to guide the researchers in studying the history of the Ottoman State. The project, undertaken within the framework of the 700th anniversary of the foundation of the Ottoman State, was implemented by the librarians and bibliographers of the Presidency of the National Library in Ankara during a period of ten months. It is intended for the benefit of researchers who wish to learn about the recent studies on the Ottomans published all over the world. The book has a preface by the Minister of Culture of Turkey H.E. Mr. İstemihan Talay, an introduction by the President of the National Library Mr. Tuncel Acar, and a section titled "About this work" by the Editors, Ms. Gönül Büyüklimanlı and Mr. Ahmet Çelenkoğlu.

In preparing this work a total of 49.836 bibliographic records were compiled. Of these, 15.167 records were collected from the National Library Database, 21.498 records from institutions in Turkey and 13.171 from institutions abroad. The catalogue covers the publications that are in the English, French and German languages. It excludes non-book materials. About 25.000 manuscripts and rare printed works found in the libraries of Turkey and abroad are excluded from it, to be covered in later publications. Author and title indices contained at the end of the second volume ease the job of the reader in finding the bibliographic records. An indispensable source that will surely be consulted with much profit by all those concerned.

Katalog Arapskih, Turskih, Perzijskih i Bosanskih Rukopisa (Catalogue of the Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Bosnian Manuscripts), Tome VIII; prepared by Mustafa Jahić. Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation London; Riasat (Chairmanship) of Islamic Community in B & H, Sarajevo; Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, Catalogues of Islamic Manuscript Series: No 32; London-Sarajevo, 1421/2000, xix + 564 p.

This catalogue of the manuscripts contained in the Gazi Husrev-Beg Library in Sarajevo is the product of cooperation between Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation and the Presidency of the scholars in Islamic studies in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Al-Furqan Foundation helped the Gazi Husrev-Beg Library by providing the electronic apparatus needed to digitize its manuscripts on CD Rom. At present nearly all the Library's collection of manuscripts has been microfilmed and work continues to complete the project. The previous volumes of the catalogue were published on the following dates: volume IV in 1419 H/1998 AD, volume V in 1419 H/1999 AD, volume VI in 1420 H/1999 AD and volume VII in 1420 H/2000 AD. Volume VIII of the Catalogue of Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Bosnian Manuscripts in the Gazi Husrev-Beg Library mainly comprises the manuscripts 4755 to 5255. A total number of 503 codices were included in this volume: 1,013 works under 304 titles. In regard to the contents of this volume, most of the manuscripts catalogued in it are related to the Arabic grammar. It also includes a number of manuscripts that deal with the Turkish and Persian languages, several manuscripts in Bosnian and one manuscript that is a translation of a Latin grammar into Turkish. This volume also contains several rare manuscripts and some works by Bosnian authors.

Smail Balić, Islam für Europa: Neue Perspektiven einer alten Religion (Islam for Europe: New Perspectives of An Old Religion), Böhlau Verlag, Vienna, 2001, xiv +258 pp. (in German)

This book is a solid answer to those who associate Islam with religious fanaticism and political radicalism. Based on the Bosnian traditions and his own information, the well-known scholar Smail Balić describes Islam as a system of tolerance and dialogue. He also defends the view that Islam can enrich the European society whose main elements are democracy and pluralism. The present book contains a total of 28 old and new articles of the author, Prof. Smail Balić, who is an Austrian of Bosnian origin. The close ties of Austria with Islam go back to the Habsburg monarchy. Austrians and Bosnians had very effective contacts during the Habsburg period. The Austro-Bosnian experience is of great historical value and of contemporary relevance regarding the situation of Islam in Europe today. The author underlines these facts in the Introduction, and notes that among the states of the European Union, it is particularly in Austria that Islam has been developing as the second biggest religion.

Smail Balić is a person who can help to solve many of the misunderstandings about Muslims. In the introduction of this book Prof. Fuad Kandil from Karlsruhe University writes that most of the Muslims who live in the West consider themselves somewhat outside of society and that the history of Muslim and European relations is one of misunderstanding. The reason for this is that in Europe the description of contemporary Islam is often based on incomplete or incorrect reports, some of which connect the concept of "Islam" with extremist groups. The present book contains highly useful views that can contribute to building a firm understanding of a harmonious existence of Muslim citizens of Europe in European society. It is also a useful study for those who are interested in the relations between the Muslim world and Europe. At the end of the book there is a glossary of terms, a list of transcriptions, selected bibliography as well as indices of subjects, personal names and place names.

(prepared by Mihin Lugal)

Commemorating distinguished men of learning and friends of IRCICA who passed away recently

Prof. Dr. Nejat Göyünç, an eminent scholar in Ottoman history

Prof. Dr. Nejat Göyünç, one of the important scholars of Turkey in the field of Ottoman history, passed away in Istanbul on 1 July 2001.

Nejat Göyünç was born in 1925. He graduated from the Department of History of Istanbul University. He served in the Archives of the Turkish Prime Ministry and as a history teacher until he was included in the official delegation in charge of a study visit to the secondary-level educational establishments in the USA. In 1957, he was sent to Germany by the Ministry of National Education, to work towards a doctorate. Having obtained his PhD, he joined the Chair of Ottoman Institutions at the Department of History of Istanbul University. Later, he transferred to Hacettepe University in Ankara, where he became full professor in 1973. He returned to Istanbul in 1977. During 1979-80 he served as Director General of the Prime Ministry's Archives. Prof. Göyünç also taught in other universities of Turkey.



Institute (1972), the Research Centre on Turkish Culture (1970) and the Turkish History Institute (corresponding member in 1971, full member in 1981). In 1955, he was invited to the 150th anniversary ceremony of the foundation of the German Oriental Institute, where he was elected a Member of Honour.

Prof. Göyünç is the author of around 10 books (some of them printed in several editions) and approximately 150 articles in the field of late Ottoman history. He was known for his perfect monitoring of new research along with his vast knowledge of the classical sources. Always generous in imparting his knowledge, Nejat Göyünç used to regularly inform his colleagues about new publications around the world; he wrote

approximately 50 articles to introduce new books. Yet, his most important contribution to studies in Ottoman history is his editorship of the journal *Osmanlı Araştırmaları / The Journal of Ottoman Studies* which has been published regularly for the last twenty years. Numerous scholars working in the departments of history of various universities have benefited from the scholarship of Prof. Göyünç by being his students and/or his colleagues. He worked continuously and tried to help others in their work. With his death, we have lost not only a valuable historian, but also an exemplary teacher, an esteemed personality and a good colleague. May God bless his soul.

Dr. Hidayet Y. Nuhoglu

Mr. Timur Bammate, a dear friend of IRCICA

Mr. Timur Bammate, a dear friend and supporter of IRCICA, was the younger son of a well-known political figure: Haidar Bammate, a diplomat and statesman, a promoter of Islamic causes on the international scene, a leader of the independence movement in North Caucasia in the 1910s and Foreign Minister of the Republic of North Caucasia. He was the brother of Prof. Necmeddin Bammate, an international official, specialist of Islamic culture and arts, and supporter of IRCICA's activities.

Timur Bammate was born in 1925 in Paris, where his father was in exile. He graduated from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich in 1950 as a mechanical engineer specialised in aerodynamics. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA) between 1950-54. From 1954 to 1976, Mr. Bammate worked on numerous research projects, among which were the design and realisation of the P-1604 airplane and an escape system for pilots of supersonic military aircraft; he was the representative of



the design department to the flight tests center for the development of the SO-9050 Trident supersonic interceptor; he was also in charge of research work on the vertical take-off and landing supersonic fighter SA-X-600 and on the Concorde, the calculation of the optimum weight of a bridge between France and England, the preparation and launching of rockets in the Missile Department of Béliet, Centaure and Dragon rockets, and research on high velocity aircraft. From 1968 to 1976, he was the Assistant to the Program Director at Airbus and in charge of technical liaison between the offices of the Airbus program. He had ended his professional activities for health reasons and retreated to his home, where he was reading and writing extensively.

His brother Prof. Necmeddin Bammate, by three years his elder, was a staunch supporter of IRCICA's objectives and a contributor to its activities. He passed away in 1985.* Necmeddin Bammate was a scholar in law, a diplomat, a high official at UNESCO (lastly Advisor to the Assistant Director General for Culture and Communication, 1975-79) and the representative of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference from 1976 onwards. He took part in the Preparatory Committee for the Islamic Declaration on Human Rights and worked together with the Assistant Secretary General of the OIC as Advisor for Cultural Identity Affairs. He wrote extensively on subjects related to Islamic civilisation, art and architecture. Necmeddin Bammate bequeathed his private book collection to the library of IRCICA with a handwritten will. The collection comprises 1600 titles of books and a great number of periodicals, reports and various gray literature which were collected over the years by Necmeddin Bammate, his father Haidar Bammate and his grandfather. The greatest part of this collection is on Islamic culture, Islamic history, fine arts and literature. Most of the books are in French, and the rest in English, Arabic, Persian, Spanish, Italian and Russian.**

This valuable collection was handed to IRCICA in 1985 by Timour Bammate, as the executor of his brother's will. In his last years, Timur Bammate, together with his wife Marianne, was preparing his brother's unpublished works for printing. May God bless his soul.

Dr. Salman Ibrahim Issa al-Obeidi (Al-Khattat), a well-known Iraqi specialist of calligraphic arts, passed away

IRCICA has learnt with deep sorrow the passing of Dr. Salman Ibrahim Issa al-Obeidi (Al-Khattat), a well-known Iraqi specialist of calligraphic arts, on 6 December 2001. Dr. al-Obeidi collaborated with IRCICA in activities relating to the art of calligraphy and served as a Jury member in its calligraphy competitions, specifically in the third (1993) and fourth (1998) competitions. The late Dr. al-Obeidi was well known for the width of his knowledge in various areas and his perseverance and devotion in the performance of his work. He was one of the contributors to the development of contemporary calligraphic arts in Iraq and one of the founders of the Iraqi Calligraphers' Union, which he chaired for eleven years. He continuously endeavoured to highlight the importance of calligraphy as an art, a field of specialty and a symbol of civilisation.

Dr. al-Obeidi graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts of Baghdad University with the mention "excellent" and received his *ijaza* (diploma in calligraphy) from the Turkish calligrapher Macit Ayril who had been invited to teach in the same faculty during 1955-1959. Al-Obeidi obtained certificates in

* An article entitled "Prof. Dr. Necmeddin Bammate As I Know Him" by Prof. Dr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu was published in *IRCICA Newsletter* no. 8, April 1985, pp. 25-27.

** See the catalogue entitled *Bammate Collection (Haidar & Necmeddin Bammate)*, IRCICA Library Acquisition List, 1990.

the fields of museology, calligraphy and gilding. He completed his doctorate in archeology and pursued a successful academic career in the Faculty of Fine Arts of Baghdad University. He always closely followed the various schools of calligraphy existing around the Muslim world and maintained relations with them. All this training and experience he acquired gave him a penetrating theoretical and technical knowledge of the tools, materials, colours and inks used in calligraphic writing. His other fields of interest were literature and poetry, in which he had an expert knowledge. Having combined these skills in his production of creative works, he won the Creativity Award of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Iraq in 1997. He taught numerous students. May God bless his soul.



IRCICA thanks Dr. Rodhan Behia, a student of Dr. al-Obeidi, for supplying the late scholar's biography.

Prof. Dr. Smail Balić, a leading scholar of Bosnia and Herzegovina



IRCICA learnt with deep sorrow the demise of Dr. Smail Balić, an exemplary scholar, a prolific writer and a devoted promoter of positive relations between peoples of different cultures and civilisations. He passed away on 14 March 2002 in Austria.

Smail Balić was born in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1920. After having worked as an expert librarian until his retirement, he settled in Austria and worked as expert consultant in the field of Oriental languages in the National Library of Vienna for long years. He published the journal titled *Islam und der Western* (Islam and the West). Among his numerous books we may cite *Kultura Bosnjaka* and *Die Kultur der Bosniaken* on the cultural history of Bosnia, *Ruf vom Minarett* (Call from the Minaret), *Das unbekannte Bosnien*, *Europas Brücke zur Islamischen Welt* (Unknown

Bosnia, the Bridge from Europe to the Islamic World) – a presentation of this last work appeared in IRCICA's *Newsletter* (No. 29, 1992). Among his books we should also cite *Islam für Europa* (Islam for Europe), which is a collection of the author's articles and which is outlined in the present issue of the *Newsletter*, as well as *Blick in die Zukunft, Festschrift für Balić* (A Glimpse into the Future). Dr. Smail Balić is also the author of almost all of the articles published about Islam in *Lexikon religiöser Grundbegriffe*. Many of his works were translated into other languages.

For several years Dr. Smail Balić defended and dwelt upon the issue of the upbringing and peaceful coexistence of people belonging to different cultural traditions. As a Muslim and as a European, he also tried to establish a bridge between his own beliefs and traditions and different aspects of Western civilisation. In matters concerning religion he attempted to prove that Bosnian Muslims represented the tolerant and open-minded features of Islam which is ready for establishing a dialogue with believers of other religions.

Dr. Smail Balić was a kind-hearted, honest person and an exemplary scholar. May God bless his soul.

NEW PUBLICATION

**Persian edition
of the book**
Islamic Civilisation in the Malay World

The comprehensive reference book entitled *Islamic Civilisation in the Malay World* was co-authored by a group of scholars from Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam with IRCICA as research coordinator, edited by Prof. Mohd Taib Osman, and published in cooperation with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, in 1997. Its original English edition was followed by a Turkish edition published by IRCICA (2000) and a Malay edition published by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Malaysia (2000). The book has now appeared in the Persian language as a result of cooperation between IRCICA and the Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations, Tehran.



The Introduction by Prof. Mohd. Taib Osman defines the area known as the Malay world on basis of its geographical, linguistic, religious and other features and describes the process of the introduction and spread of Islam in the region. Though it was not a uniform or homogenous one, that process nevertheless involved features and tendencies which were commonly observed throughout the region. There are eight chapters in the book, written by Hussin Mutalib on "Islamic Malay Polity in Southeast Asia", Zainal Kling on "Social Structure: The Practices of Malay Religiosity", Shaharil Talib and Mohammad Raduan on "Economic Life: From Ruling the Waves to Toiling the Land", Azyumardi Azra on "Education, Law, Mysticism: Constructing Social Realities", Ismail Hamid on "Kitab Jawi: Intellectualizing Literary Tradition", Kamaruddin Mohd. Ali on "Architecture: Unity of the Sacred and the Profane", Raja Fuziah Raja Tun Uda and Abdul Rahman Al-Ahmadi on "Malay Arts and Crafts: Islamic Inspiration in Creativity", and Nasir Tamara on "The Ummah: Rising to the Challenges with Special Reference to Indonesia". There are colour plates, ten maps, a glossary, a bibliography and an index.

The book has been translated from English into Persian by Mohamad Jawad Natic Pur and published as a joint publication by IRCICA and the Organisation of Culture and Islamic Relations, Tehran, 2002.